



IBN 'ATĀ' ALLĀH AL-ISKANDARĪ

# The Key to Salvation

*A Sufi Manual of Invocation*

THE REMEMBRANCE OF GOD IN SUFISM: A TRANSLATION OF

IBN 'ATĀ' ALLĀH'S

M I F T Ā H   A L - F A L Ā H   W A   M I Ṣ B Ā H   A L - A R W Ā H

(The Key of Salvation and the Lamp of Souls)

Translated from the Arabic with an Introduction and Notes

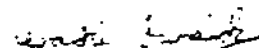
by

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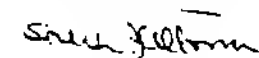
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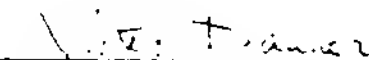


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### Dedication

To the memory of my parents, Philip and Martha A. Koury, who always stressed the importance of education, this work is respectfully dedicated.

### Acknowledgements

To say that writing a dissertation is no easy task is certainly an understatement. Hence, I would like to take this opportunity to thank publicly the various people who have given of their time, advice, and support in seeing this work to completion.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Professor Wadie Jwaideh, chairman of my committee, for his guidance and supervision. His tremendous scholarship in Arabic literature, and Islam history, among a host of other fields, provided many invaluable suggestions, comments, and clarification on obscure points and references.

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In addition, a word of special thanks is due Ms. Carol Lauder milk who so patiently typed the entire text in spite of numerous corrections and changes and, no doubt, illegible writing at times.

Lastly, but in no way least, I offer my deep gratitude to all my friends and family for their moral support and faith in me. They made the going quite a bit easier than it might have been otherwise.

Needless to say, responsibility for whatever mistakes or shortcomings may occur in the work devolves upon me.

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## SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration system used throughout the book to represent Arabic sounds is as follows:

'(=hamzah), b, t, th, j, ḥ, kh, d, dh, r, z, s, sh, ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ẓ, ʿ, gh, f, q, k, l, m, n, h, w, y

The short vowels are a, i, u; the long vowels are ā, ī, ū.

In the construct state, the tā' marbūtah is changed from -ah to -at.

Diphthongs are written ay and aw, as in bayt and yawm.

The definite article al- and 'l is assimilated to the anteropaletons, which results in esh-shams rather than al-shams.

Long vowels before hamzat al-waḥl are written as short; e.g., Abu 'l-Ḥasan rather than Abū 'l-Ḥasan.

## QUR'ĀNIC CITATIONS

In translating Qur'ānic verses, the English translation of Mohammed Mermaduke Pickthall, The Meaning of the Glorious Koran, has been our guide except where the context in Ibn 'Aṭṭā'Allāh's work calls for a different nuance or wording of a Qur'ānic text.

## Introduction

It is unfortunate but understandable that Islam has remained something of a mystery to most Westerners, since it is viewed as a religion completely beyond the pale of the Judeo-Christian ethos. However, what is astonishing and somewhat ironic is that Sufism is likewise a mystery to most Muslims who view it as some kind of innovation or even deviation bordering on heresy. Comments to the effect that Sufis do not believe in the necessity of saying the five daily prayers or following the Sharī'ah attest to the ignorance of the average believer.

This is due in part to the perceived dichotomy between esoteric and exoteric Islam, the interior life of prayer versus the exterior ritual prayers, the content versus the form. Even Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, the author of the Miftāh al-Falāh wa Miṣbāh al-Arwāh was not totally immune from a certain measure of prejudice, as will be seen. His resulting change of heart led him to take great pains when discussing taṣawwuf to indicate the solid basis for it within the traditional framework of Islam, to show its complementarity with exoteric Islam, and its unique ability to provide a deeper and richer spiritual life for believers.

The magnitude of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's contribution to elucidating the principles and practices of Sufism, especially those of the Shādhilī order is incalculable, as is the number of lives he touched and transformed by his own life and through his writings down to the present. Not only was he a realized spiritual master but also an expert in Mālikī fiqh. In fact, he was learned in the Sharī'ah well before the ṭarīqah. His books reveal a keen intellect, at once logical, analytical,

perceptive, intuitive, and compassionate. He is a credit to both dimensions of Islam, the formal and the mystical. No doubt, were more Muslims aware of his works and ideas, they would see Sufism for what it really is—the spiritual and contemplative dimension of Islam that observes not just the Law but the spirit of the Law.

## Biographical Sketch

Tāj ad-Dīn Abu 'l-Faḍl Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm b. 'Aṭā' Allāh al-Iskandarī al-Judhāmī ash-Shādhilī,<sup>1</sup> known simply as Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, was born in Alexandria, Egypt, as his nisbah indicates, about the middle of the seventh/thirteenth century. His family were renowned Mālikī scholars from the Banu Judhām tribe, originally from Arabia. His grandfather, 'Abd al-Karīm (d. 612/1216) had distinguished himself as an expert in fiqh, uṣūl (principles of jurisprudence), and Arabic, having studied under the famous Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Abyārī. He had written several books, among which were al-Bayān wa't-Taqrīb fi Sharḥ et-Tahdhīb, Mukhtaṣar at-Tahdhīb, and Mukhtaṣar al-Mufaṣṣal, and had been very hostile to Sufism.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's father Muḥammad (death date unknown) seems to have been of a different mind and although a faqīh, he was also the disciple of the great Sufi shaykh Abu 'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī (593-656/1197-1258), the founder of the Shādhilī order.<sup>3</sup>

As a youth, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh received a traditional Islamic education in such disciplines as Qur'ānic recitation, ḥadīth, tafsīr, grammar, uṣūl, philosophy, belles-lettres, and of course fiqh<sup>4</sup> under some of the best and most illustrious teachers of Alexandria, in addition, no doubt to the instruction given him by his own family. While not all of his teachers are known, the most important ones include the following:

for the study of hadīth, Abu l-Ma'ālī Ahmad al-Abarqūhī (615-701/1219-1301),<sup>5</sup> a Shāfi'ī traditionist and a discipula of the Suhrawardī order<sup>6</sup> originally from Persia, and Sheraf ad-Dīn ad-Dimyātī (613-705/1217-1305),<sup>7</sup> one of the outstanding Shāfi'ī muhaddiths and huffāz of his day and a discipule of Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī; for the study of Arabic grammar, fiqh, and adab (Arabic literature), Muḥyī'd-Dīn al-Mārūnī (d. 693/1294),<sup>8</sup> considered to be the grammarian par excellance of Alexandria; for the study of tafsīr, Nāṣir ad-Dīn b. al-Munayyir (620-683/1222-1285),<sup>9</sup> a great Mālikī faqīh who established his reputation in tafsīr, fiqh, uṣūl, philosophical speculation, Arabic, rhetoric, and genealogy and was also a discipule of Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī; for Qur'ānic recitation, fiqh, and related subjects, Makīn ad-Dīn al-Asmar (c. 612-692/1215-1293), "the shaykh of the Qur'ān reciters in Alexandria,"<sup>10</sup> who was likewise the discipula of both Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī and his successor Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī (616-686/1220-1288); and for the study of kalām (Islamic theology), uṣūl al-fiqh (principles of jurisprudence) Ash'arism, logic, disputation and rhetoric, Shams ad-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī (615-688/1220-1290),<sup>11</sup> a brilliant Shāfi'ī jurist who taught at the Mashhad of al-Ḥusayn and then at the Mashhad of the Imam ash-Shāfi'ī in Cairo. He only accepted students who were already well versed in the Sharī'ah.

There were probably many other teachers who shaped Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's formation,<sup>12</sup> but the above list is sufficiently indicative of the fact that he received the best possible education of his day. That together with his love of learning<sup>13</sup> resulted in his achieving quite a reputation for Mālikī scholarship by the time he was a young man in his twenties.

Ironically, in spite of his father's attachment to the Shādhilī master Abu'l-Ḥasan, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh was initially rather hostile to Sufism much like his grandfather, as he himself admits in his book Latā'if al-Minan,<sup>14</sup> but not for any definite reason. In fact, what precipitated his meeting with Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī, the successor of Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan<sup>15</sup> was an argument with one of al-Mursī's discipulas. Consequently, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh decided to go see who this man was because after all, "a man of Truth has certain signs that cannot be hidden."<sup>16</sup> He found him holding forth on such lofty spiritual matters that he was dazzled. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh states that at that moment God removed whatever objections he had previously had. Something had obviously touched his heart and mind, so he went home to be alone and reflect.

That was apparently the turning point for him, for shortly thereafter Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh returned to visit Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī who received him so warmly that he was embarrassed and humbled. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh states, "The first thing that I said to him was 'O Master, by God, I love you.' Then he answered, 'May God love you as you love me.'"<sup>17</sup> Then Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh told him of various worries and sadnesses he had, so the Shaykh told him:

There are four states of the servant, not five: blessings, trials, obedience, and disobedience. If you are blessed, then what God requires of you is thankfulness. If you are tried, then what God requires of you is patience. If you are obedient, that what God requires of you is the witnessing of His blessings upon you. If you are disobedient, then what God requires of you is asking forgiveness.<sup>18</sup>

After leaving Shaykh al-Mursī, he mentions that he felt that his worries and sadness were like a garment that had been removed. From that time



in 674/1276 when Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh was initiated into the Shādhilī order until the death of Shaykh al-Mursī twelve years later, he became his devoted disciple and says that in all those years he never heard his shaykh say anything that contradicted the Sharī'ah.<sup>19</sup>

Although the barekah of Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās' presence was such that Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's attitude was virtually transformed overnight, nevertheless, he had certain misgivings. When he heard some students say that those who keep company with Sufi sheykhs do not do well in their studies,<sup>20</sup> it grieved him to think of foregoing his schooling or foregoing his shaykh's company. Later he went to see Shaykh al-Mursī, without saying a word to him about it, yet the Shaykh told him,

If a merchant associates with us, we do not say to him, 'Leave your trade and come'; or to an artisan, we do not say to him, 'Leave your craft and come'; or to a student, we do not say to him, 'Leave your studies and come.' Rather, we take everyone as he is, where God has placed him, and what is decreed for him through our hands will be given to him.<sup>21</sup>

At another point in time, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh entertained thoughts of quitting his position in order to devote himself fully to the Path. He was already a Mālikī faqīh of note by the time he met Shaykh al-Mursī. Again without saying a word to his spiritual master, the Shaykh told him that once when one of his disciples asked him if he should quit his job, he told him that it was not necessary, that he should stay wherein God had placed him since "what is decreed to you by our hands will be conferred upon you."<sup>22</sup> Consequently, any previous thoughts of leaving his position left Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, and he was satisfied with his lot.

Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās even predicted that Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh would become an authority in both the Sharī'ah and the tarīqah. According to an

account told to Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh by Jamāl ed-Dīn, the son of his spiritual master, he said to his father, "They want to establish Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh in fiqh." So the Shaykh told his son, "They will establish him in fiqh, and I will establish him in teṣawwuf."<sup>23</sup> Afterwards when Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh visited Shaykh al-Mursī, the latter told him, "When the faqīh Nāṣir ad-Dīn<sup>24</sup> regains his health, he will seat you in the place of your grandfather. He will sit on one side and I on the other. You will speak, if God wills, concerning both eras of knowledge." Then Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh simply adds, "So it was as he had said."<sup>25</sup>

Again on another occasion, the Shaykh said to him, "Persevere, for by God, if you persevere, verily you will be a muftī in both domains." As Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh explains, "He meant the domain of the Sharī'ah, of exoteric knowledge, and the domain of the Truth, of esoteric knowledge."<sup>26</sup>

One might justifiably wonder what sort of man Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī could be who could change a man's long-held view virtually overnight. Yet if one delves into his background, one realizes that he, like his predecessor Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan asb-Shādhilī, was no ordinary man.<sup>27</sup> Rather, he was a spiritually enlightened master who obviously had a clear, intuitive perception of things—as witness his foretelling of the future of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh as a great teacher in both the Law and the Path or his foretelling of the death of one of his disciples in a year's time.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan, the great founder of the Shādhilī order, acknowledged his disciple's immense spirituality.<sup>29</sup> The sheer presence of Shaykh al-Mursī and his inspired words evidently went straight to the heart of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, striking a chord within that recognized the truth of what he heard instinctively.

Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās whose full name is Shihāb ad-Dīn Abu'l-'Abbās Ahmad b. 'Umar al-Anṣārī al-Mursī al-Mālikī<sup>30</sup> was the foremost disciple of Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī,<sup>31</sup> the quṭb<sup>32</sup> of his day and one of the greatest Sufi masters in the history of Islām. After Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan's death in 656/1258, Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās, who was already a teacher of the Path in his shaykh's lifetime,<sup>33</sup> became his direct successor and head of the order.

Due to his own lofty spiritual station, Shaykh al-Mursī likewise became the quṭb of his day and was so recognized by many disciples and followers.<sup>34</sup> In fact, one of the Shādhilī disciples had a dream in which he saw a group of people standing looking toward the sky. Then he saw Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan dressed in white descending. At this point Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās firmly planted his feet on the ground, and Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan entered into him from his head and disappeared. This was generally interpreted that Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās' teaching and methods were an unbroken continuation of his master's, without any divergence.<sup>35</sup> Of course, each was different in personality but their teachings on the path were identical.

As Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās used to speak of his master with respect and deference, so too did Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh. Referring to his teacher, he states,

You would only hear him speak about the Great Intellect, the Greatest Name[of God], Its four aspects, the Names,<sup>36</sup> letters, the circles of saints, the spiritual stations of the pious, the angels near to the Throne, the science of the esoteric mysteries ('ulūm al-asrār), supports of invocation (amdād al-adhkār), the Day of Judgment . . . and so on.<sup>37</sup>

Moreover, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh affirms that "the basis of his order, may God be pleased with him, is concentration on God, nondispersal ('adam et-

tafriqah), perseverance in spiritual retreat, and invocation,"<sup>38</sup> which refers as much to the way of Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī.

That Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh must have practiced the above-mentioned methods is obvious. He repeatedly emphasizes their importance in the following translation, as will be seen. What spiritual fruits he must have received cannot be known, but his development into a Sufi master capable of guiding and teaching others took place within the lifetime of his shaykh, i.e., well within the twelve-year period before 686/1288.<sup>39</sup> His discipline and progress in the path coupled with his great learning made him renowned as a religious authority.<sup>40</sup>

Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's virtue, majestic presence, eloquence, and spiritual insights were such that he had many followers.<sup>41</sup> He even performed miracles, some of which have been recorded, such as speaking from his grave to one Kamāl ad-Dīn b. al-Ḥamām who had gone to the shaykh's tomb to recite Sūrat Hūd.<sup>42</sup> As a result, Ibn al-Ḥamām was counseled to be buried there. Another miracle attributed to Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh is his having been seen in Mecca at three different places by one of his disciples who had gone on Pilgrimage. When the latter returned, he asked if the shaykh had left the country in his absence and was told no. Then he went to see him and Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh asked him, "Whom did you see on this trip of yours?" The disciple answered, "O Master, I saw you." So he smiled and said, "The realized sage fills the universe. If he summoned the quṭb, verily he would answer."<sup>43</sup>

Still another miracle recorded is the story of three men on their way to attend Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's public lecture or majlis.<sup>44</sup> One said, "If I were free from the family, I would become an ascetic"; the second one said, "I pray and fast but I do not see a speck of benefit";

and the third said, "Indeed, my prayers do not please me so how can they please my Lord?" After arriving, they heard Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh discourse and in their presence he said, "There are among people those who say . . ." and he repeated their words exactly.

Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh taught at both the Azhar Mosque and the Maṣūriyyah Madrasah in Cairo as well as privately to his disciples. However, it is not known where his zawiyah was located. His stature and authority were so great in both the esoteric and exoteric domains that when he had a confrontation in 707/1307 with Taqī'd-Dīn b. Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328), the Ḥanbalī faqīh, hundreds attended. He was in the forefront of those who accused Ibn Taymiyyah of attacks against the Shaykh al-Akbar Muḥyī'd-Dīn b. al-'Arabī and other Sufi practices, such as the repetition of the Name of God in the ritual of dhikr, which Ibn Taymiyyah denounced as bid'ah.<sup>45</sup> This was as much an attack against Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh as other mystics, since he stressed its importance for the initiate's spiritual advancement in several of his works, most particularly al-Qaṣd al-Mujarrad fī Ma'rīfat al-Isim al-Mufrad. However, Ibn Taymiyyah was not charged.

Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh died within two years of this public trial at around sixty years of age in the middle of Jumada II 709/November 1309.<sup>46</sup> As befitting an eminent and learned teacher, he died in the Maṣūriyyah Madrasah. His funeral procession was witnessed by hundreds of people and he was buried in the Qarafah Cemetery in Cairo<sup>47</sup> in what is today called the City of the Dead, at the foot of Jabal al-Muqattam. His tomb became famous as the site of homage, visitation, prayer, and miraculous occurrences.<sup>48</sup> To this day this is still the case.

This pious and extraordinary contemplative figure left behind a spiritual legacy no less impressive than those of his own beloved

sheykh, and the august founder Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī. All the biographers refer to Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh with illustrious titles and reverence<sup>49</sup> and mention how marvelously he spoke and how uplifting his words were.<sup>50</sup> In spite of the fact that he followed the Mālikī madhhab, the Shāfi'īs laid claim to him, most probably because some of his earlier teachers had been Shāfi'ī scholars, not to mention some of his students.<sup>51</sup>

Hence, his disciples could only be all the more devoted in their attachment to and love for him. Of the untold numbers of followers that Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh had, both in Cairo, Alexandria, and elsewhere, only very few names are known. That is, doubtless, due to the fact that the Shādhilīs did not advocate withdrawing from the world or wearing special clothing to distinguish themselves. They were "in the world but not of the world," so to speak. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī quotes adh-Dhahabī who recounts, "I saw Shaykh Tāj ad-Dīn al-Fāriqī when he returned from Egypt, extolling his [Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's] sermons and spiritual signs."<sup>52</sup>

Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī comments that, "He was the teacher of my father [Taqī'd-Dīn as-Subkī] in Sufism," which is corroborated by as-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ḥajar.<sup>53</sup> Taqī'd-Dīn as-Subkī was one of the most famous 'ulanā' in his day, eminent in fiqh, tafsīr, ahādīth, theology, and juridical formulation. Ironically he was praised by no less an 'ālim' than Ibn Taymiyyah!

Several names are mentioned in the Latā'if al-Minan, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's biography of both his shaykh al-Mursī and Shaykh ash-Shādhilī (which also reveals glimpses of his own life), but it is difficult to ascertain in many instances whether they are companions in the

ṭarīqah, spiritual mentors, shaykhs in the general sense of learned doctors of the Sharī'ah, or his followers. One of the more frequently quoted names is that of Shaykh Makīn ad-Dīn al-Asmar, a pious teacher and disciple of Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās.<sup>54</sup> However, it is known that Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh counseled many people from all levels of society including the Sultan al-Malik al-Manṣūr Ḥusām ad-Dīn Lājīn (r. 696-698/1296-1298).<sup>55</sup>

According to certain sources, one of the disciples of Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh to succeed him was Shaykh Dā'ūd al-Bākhilī (d. 733/1332),<sup>56</sup> the fourth Sufi master in the Shādhilī silṣilah. He was learned in many disciplines and the author of al-Laṭīfah al-Mardiyyah bī Sharḥ Ḥizb ash-Shādhiliyyah. Concurrently, Shaykh Shihāb ad-Dīn b. al-Maylaq (d. 739/1349), a man of deep spiritual insights is also mentioned as another successor,<sup>57</sup> whose public sermons touched the heart.

Through them and most assuredly others such as Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Qarāfī, the Shādhilī ṭarīqah branched out to form different silāsil, all going back to its namesake. As Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh was one of several disciples of Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās who became teachers and spiritual guides in their own right, so too did many of Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's disciples, thus continuing the spiritual tradition and legacy of their founder down to the present. Where Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh differs from his two predecessors is in his writings, as will be seen.

#### Literary Works

Neither the founder of the Shādhilī order nor his successor, Shaykh al-Mursī composed any books or treatises on taṣawwuf. When each was asked why he did not write on such mysteries, Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan said, "My books are my companions,"<sup>58</sup> while Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās replied, "The

sciences of this way are the sciences of realization and the minds of people cannot bear them."<sup>59</sup>

However, the list of books used by both shaykhs is quite impressive and indicative of the high caliber of their religious instruction. Some of the works mentioned include the following:<sup>60</sup>

Ṭhyā' 'Uṣūl ad-Dīn by Abū Ḥamīd al-Ghazālī<sup>61</sup>--on beliefs and practices

Khatm al-Awliyā' by Muḥammad al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmidhī<sup>62</sup>--on the lives of saints; for novices

Kitāb al-Mawāqif by an-Niḥfārī--on gnostic illuminations

Kitāb al-Irshād by Muḥammad al-Juwaynī--on uṣūl ad-dīn

Kitāb Masabīb as-Sunnah by Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn al-Baghawī--on āḥādīth

Kitāb ash-Shifā' by al-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ<sup>63</sup>--on the life of the Prophet

Qūt al-Qulūb by Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī<sup>64</sup>--on esoteric and exoteric beliefs

Though both spiritual masters did not feel the need to write, yet both composed spiritual litanias called ahzāb. Those of Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan's "were considered by him to be of an inspired nature, coming from the Prophet."<sup>65</sup> Some were given titles like "Ḥizb al-Baḥr" and "Ḥizb an-Nūr" and are still recited for their special barakah, while the ahzāb of Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās are "sometimes modifications of those issuing from Abu'l-Ḥasan and sometimes they are of his own inspiration [but] not as numerous as those of his master, nor as famous."<sup>66</sup> These ahzāb contain various phrases, Divine Names, and verses from the Qur'ān in a particular order intended to bestow blessings on those reciting them.

"Their powerful influence and vast dissemination throughout the Muslim world and at all levels of society, in the course of centuries down to the present may suggest that, in this respect alone the Latā'if is a work of major importance in the history of Islamic devotion."<sup>67</sup>

Thanks to Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, through as well as personal prayers (du'a, pl. ad'iyah), conversations, and many comments of both predecessors have been preserved in Latā'if al-Minan, a unique book on the pious and extraordinary lives of the first two Shādhilī qutbs and their spiritual views.<sup>68</sup> Although it is one of the last works that Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh wrote--if not the last one<sup>69</sup>--it is, no doubt, the most valuable for the information it provides on the teachings of the Shādhilī ṭarīqah.

This book is the most precious document that we possess for following and understanding the development of the new order and for seeing the two great persons, the founders of the order and esoteric poles of their time evolve in the middle of a society in full transformation in its political and also religious constitution under both the doctrinal and ceremonial aspect.<sup>70</sup>

Certainly it is the earliest. Written to honor his shaykh and the Shādhilī founder and extol their virtues, esoteric knowledge, and miraculous abilities, and because no one else had undertaken to do so,<sup>71</sup> the Latā'if reveals a wealth of background on Sufi tradition including important autobiographical details of its author.<sup>72</sup>

The book is basically divided into an introduction, ten chapters, and a conclusion. Within these sections such topics as the meaning of prophecy, the superiority of saints to religious scholars, quotations from the Qur'ān and Hadīth, the question of miracles, sanctity, adab, spiritual stations, and explanations of mystical phrases by gnostics, and other doctrinal matters are discussed. Various people are also

mentioned, some the contemporaries of Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās and Ibn 'Aṭā Allāh and others those of Shaykh Abu l-Hasan ash-Shādhilī. In his conclusion, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh gives his silsilah, affirming that Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī was indeed his only spiritual master and adds a letter of counsel to his disciples in Alexandria dated 694/1294<sup>73</sup> and a poem, ending as he had begun, in praise of the Prophet of Islam.

In spite of the fact that Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh sets forth what each chapter deals with, it must be said that there is nothing very organized about the book in terms of providing any chronological order--contrary to Taftazānī's views.<sup>74</sup> It is as if the author selected topics to discuss and then interjected anecdotes or comments about his life or the lives of others vis-à-vis Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās to show his shaykh's spiritual discernment and rank. Yet when all is said and done, the Latā'if remains highly interesting and informative and easy to read.

Not only did it ensure the memory and reputation of his two predecessors but it also provided a written legacy to succeeding generations of followers. As a result, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh had the added distinction of becoming the source to whom subsequent biographers of the Shādhilī order turned,<sup>75</sup> a fitting honor for his life's work.

Of all his works that have come down to the present,<sup>76</sup> namely, Latā'if al-Minan, Kitāb al-Hikam, at-Tarwīf fi Isqā' at-Tadbīr, al-Qaṣd al-Mujarrad fi Ma'rīfat al-Isām al-Mufrad, Miftāh al-Falāh wa Miqbāh al-Arwāh, Tāj al-'Arūs al-Hawī li-Tahdhīb an-Nufūs, and 'Unwān at-Tawfīq, by far the most popular and the most well known is the Kitāb al-Hikam. Composed in the lifetime of his master Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās (i.e., before 686/1287) and praised it highly,<sup>77</sup> the Hikam is no doubt Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's earliest work, for references to it are found in his other books such as the Latā'if, Kitāb at-Tarwīf, and Tāj al-'Arūs.<sup>78</sup>

Considered to be the "fruit of his spiritual realization or as an expression of it in a literary vehicle,"<sup>79</sup> the Hikam is a collection of aphorisms, treatises or epistles (rasā'il), and supplications (munājāt) having to do with many aspects of the spiritual path such as belief in the oneness and unity of God (tawhīd), gnosis (ma'rifah), spiritual states and stations (ahwāl and maqāmāt), struggle against one's self (mujāhadah an-nafs) one's adab vis-à-vis God, and advice to the murīd. Written in a beautiful often rhyming prose, its elliptical observations belie the depth and intensity of meaning. The work assumes a great deal of knowledge of Sufi terminology and doctrine on the part of the reader.

Although ostensibly the format is one flowing composition in the original, it is a bit disjointed as the author goes from one idea to the next. Western translations have attempted to divide it according to content,<sup>80</sup> but there is no logical progression between the passages. However, this is hardly seen as a shortcoming. Put another way:

The aphorisms of the Hikam are strung together like a necklace of precious jewels of different sorts, each jewel reflecting the diverse aspects of the contemplative life of Islam. But it is illuminative knowledge, or gnosis (ma'rifah), that constitutes the inner thread which holds them all in place and gives an underlying unity to the whole.<sup>81</sup>

In fact, the Hikam is considered a kind of Sufi manual and Ibn 'Aṭā' Allah became known thereafter in Sufi circles as "Ṣāhib al-Hikam."

If the number of commentaries of it are any indication at all, then the Hikam's success has been phenomenal.<sup>82</sup> The Shādhilī Shaykh Aḥmad Zerrūq (d. 899/1494) wrote about thirty himself, but the most well-known belong to Ibn 'Abbād ar-Rundī (733-792/1332-1389).<sup>83</sup> The Moroccan Shādhilī Shaykh Ibn 'Ajībah (1160-1224/1747-1809) in his sharḥ of the Hikam

quotes the Shaykh Mawlay al-'Arabī, the shaykh of his own master Sīdī Muḥammad al-Buzīdī al-Ḥasanī, who said, "I heard the faqīh al-Bennānī say, 'The Hikam of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh is almost a revelation (wahy). If it were permitted to recite the ṣalāt without the Qur'ān, verily, the words of the Hikam would be allowed."<sup>84</sup> That is quite a compliment, especially coming from a faqīh, but that is part of the appeal of the Hikam: there is nothing therein that contradicts the Sharī'ah. If it did, Taqī'd-Dīn as-Subkī would not have regarded it as lawful.<sup>85</sup>

Not only did fuqarā' and fuqahā' of the past appreciate the Hikam but also those of recent times. Many great scholars in the early part of this century taught it at the Azhar. The late Shaykh Muḥammad Bekhīt who was the muftī of ad-Diyār al-Miṣriyyah used it to instruct people at the mosque of al-Ḥuseyn after the 'asr prayer during Ramaḍān.<sup>86</sup> "The Muslim University of Tunis, Jāmi' al-Zaytūnah, maintains deep respect for this book and indicates it as an obligatory text for the advanced teaching of mysticism."<sup>87</sup>

Today the Hikam's undiminished popularity is evidenced by the fact that it is still being published. Moreover, recent translations of it into French and English attest to the extraordinary power, style, and appeal of its message and by extension to that of its author.<sup>88</sup>

The Kitāb at-Tanwīr fī Isqāṭ et-Tadbīr was written, according to Sheykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, to clarify the way to union with God through abandoning self-direction and struggling with the decrees of fate. In other words, he emphasizes the importance for the believer of relying on God's choices and accepting His Will. To support his arguments, as in all his works, the Shaykh refers to the Qur'ān and āḥādīth of the Prophet. Naturally he also stresses the spiritual virtues and states that there are nine stations of certitude (maqāmāt al-yaqīn): repentance

(tawbah), asceticism (zuhd), patience (ṣabr), gratitude (shukr), fear (khawf), contentment (riqā'), hope (rajā'), trust (tawakkul), and love (maḥabbah) with the sine que non that not one of these stations is valid unless accompanied by the elimination of self-direction vis-à-vis God.<sup>89</sup>

The work is written in a didactic style with citations throughout from his shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās and Shaykhs Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī and Abū Madyan. References from the Kitāb al-Hikam are found and explained,<sup>90</sup> making the Tanwīr a kind of commentary. It is divided into various sections with verses of poetry. In addition, anecdotes relating to Ibn 'Aṭā'Allāh, his shaykh, and founder are mentioned, which likewise appear in the Laṭā'if al-Minan.<sup>91</sup> The book concludes with a series of munājāt but unlike the Hikam, these proceed from God to the servant, and then ends with a supplication (du'ā'). Whether the Laṭā'if or the Tanwīr was composed first is difficult to know. A reference to Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al-Marjānī with the formula rahimahu'llāh (may God have mercy upon him) after his name indicates that the Tanwīr must have been written after 699/1299.<sup>92</sup> However, Brockelmann provides a different but more precise date by stating that the book was begun in Mecca and completed in Damascus in 695/1296.<sup>93</sup>

In terms of its importance in general and vis-à-vis Ibn 'Aṭā'Allāh's other works, the Tanwīr was obviously very popular due to its numerous copies and printings.<sup>94</sup> When asked by a Sufi aspirant about which books to read on taṣawwuf, Shaykh Ibn 'Abbād ar-Rundī (733-792/1332-1390) wrote back that "the book which you have by Ibn 'Aṭā'Allāh, the Kitāb at-Tanwīr, comprises all that the books on Sufism, whether detailed or condensed, contain including both detailed explanations and concise expressions."<sup>95</sup> That is quite an endorsement of its

value and comprehensiveness. "An indispensable companion-piece to the Hikam," the Tanwīr is a kind of tafsīr of the Hikam<sup>96</sup> and as such is extremely valuable not only for expounding on the spiritual content of the Hikam but also for elaborating on the relationship of the virtues to the dhikru'llāh. The true meaning of tawakkul is carried to its logical conclusion and the necessity for eliminating one's ego-centered will vis-à-vis the Divine Will is constantly emphasized. The result is the amazing variety of Ibn 'Aṭā'Allāh's arguments and the scope of his knowledge and skill.

While al-Qaṣd al-Mujarred fī Ma'rifat al-Isim al-Mufrad<sup>97</sup> deals with the remembrance of God in a general fashion, its focus is more specifically on the significance and uniqueness of the Divine Name Allāh, which the Shaykh defines as that of

Supreme Essence (adh-Dhāt al-'Alīyyah), described by the attribute of Divinity (al-Ulūhiyyah), known by the quality of Lordship (ar-Rabūbiyyah), characterized by the attribute of Oneness (al-Aḥadiyyah), unique by the unity of His solitude (waḥdat al-waḥdaniyyah), qualified by everlasting eternity (ṣamadāniyyat as-ṣamadiyyah), transcending all manner of species and types of comparisons. He is sanctified beyond any point where human intelligence could comprehend the innermost depths of His knowledge (ma'rifah).<sup>98</sup>

As the Name of Supreme Essence, Allāh is the greatest Name because It is the synthesis of all the Divine Attributes and Intelligible Realities. As such, the Shaykh envisages this Name as "the concrete embodiment of ultimate metaphysical reality."<sup>99</sup> After stating that some authorities refute the notion that the Name is derived,<sup>100</sup> he presents the other side and offers several possibilities.<sup>101</sup> Ibn 'Aṭā'Allāh not only cites the sacred sources, viz., the Qur'ān and tradition, but also other eminent spiritual authorities and verses of poetry.

He constantly lays emphasis on the importance of the Name Allāh as the Absolute Necessary Being (al-Wājib al-Wujūd al-Muṭlaq) and the only True Reality (al-Haqqiyyu 'l-Haqq). Whereas certain of the Attributes of the Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names (al-Asmā' l-Husnā) can apply to man and creation, albeit as imperfect reflections of their Divine prototypes, this Name of Divinity cannot be used to describe anyone but God. The former is for takhalluq (appropriation) while the latter is for ta'alluq (attachment).<sup>102</sup> Hence, for example, a person can be kind or generous or strong, reflecting the qualities of al-Halīm or al-Karīm or al-Qawī, but one cannot reflect the quality of Ultimate Being.

Moreover, Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh explains that the Name Allāh is a perfect Name in form as well as essence, because if the alif or hamza is deleted, the Name becomes lillāh, to or for God. If the first lām is deleted, it becomes lahu, to Him and if the second lām is deleted, it becomes Hū, the Name of Pure Essence.<sup>103</sup> He expounds on the symbolism of each letter, the numerical value of each, the mystery connected with the Divine Name, and the categories of the Ninety-Nine Names.<sup>104</sup>

The Divine Name Allāh takes precedence over all the other names and attributes. "All other names describe Him or are an attribute or are attached to Him . . . It is said that they are among the Names of Allah and not among the names of as-Ṣabūr or al-Ghafūr or al-Jabbār.<sup>105</sup> All the names contain mysteries but the greatest Name contains mysteries not found in the other Names. Also unlike the other Names, the Divine Name Allāh cannot be enumerated. This Name is like "pure light, [it] contains all colors within itself when refracted, and these 'colors' are the rest of the names of God, or the even more numerous Qualities."<sup>106</sup>

Part two deals with the role and significance of dhikr in achieving spiritual realization. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh mentions the various kinds of remembrance and the supremacy of invoking the Divine Name. He cites Qur'ānic verses much as in the Miftāh al-Falāh, which will be discussed later. Once again, the Shaykh presupposes a good deal of background on the part of the reader, both doctrinal and otherwise. "The author presents his subject without developing certain aspects relating to precise definitions, difficult doctrinal points, [and] analysis of details which may have the disadvantage of making the exposition abstract."<sup>107</sup> His style is clear, direct, and didactic which is normal, considering his position, and his knowledge of the doctrine of Divine metaphysical and spiritual realities is extraordinary. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's "philosophical and theological education emerge as does his use of philosophical and scholastic terminology on the Eternal and Contingent."<sup>108</sup>

Some repetition from his other works can be seen, but to a certain extent that is to be expected given that each work is basically a variation on the same theme of tawḥīd. The date of the work is unknown. One passage is a paraphrase of the same idea in Latā'if al-Minan on the states of the novice.<sup>109</sup> Others include the same ahādīth and stories found in the Miftāh al-Falāh.<sup>110</sup> One can only conclude that it was probably written some time near the end of his life for his disciples, perhaps as a help in meditational practices on the Divine Name.

All in all, the Qaṣd is a highly interesting, inspired, and thought-provoking work which still continues to fascinate even students of today. Its recent translation into French with commentary is an eloquent testimony to its timeless message and universal appeal.<sup>111</sup>



One of Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's lesser known compositions which have come down to us is Tāj al-'Arūs al-Hawī li-Tahdhīb an-Nufūs.<sup>112</sup> A short work, perhaps less than fifty pages, it is printed on the margin of Kitāb at-Tanwīr fī Isqāṭ et-Tadbīr.<sup>113</sup> The Tāj begins with an opening salutation on the Prophet, his family and Companions by the editor or compiler then plunges immediately into the text, giving one the impression that it might have been put together by one or more of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's disciples rather than by the Shaykh himself. It does not flow as smoothly as do most of his other works. In fact, it is a bit disjointed in parts as it goes from one topic to the next and back again.

The book seems to be a series of basic lectures--perhaps public lectures--that Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh might have given at some point and later had written down. By basic is meant that the subject matter deals with the importance and necessity of repentance and obedience to God, of renouncing one's bad or immoral behavior, of associating with pious individuals, and of following the Sharī'ah. The work contains scores of analogies, the requisite references to the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, stories of saints and even quotations from Shaykhs Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī, Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī, and Makīn ad-Dīn al-Asmar, a leading disciple of al-Mursī. But it is a far cry from the lofty and sophisticated mystical and metaphysical expositions found in his other books.

Passages from the Latā'if, such as the story about the founder Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan's being given food by Christians after a three-day retreat and fast<sup>114</sup> or munājāt from the Kitāb al-Hikam,<sup>115</sup> can be found which leads one to conclude that the Tāj al-'Arūs was one of the Shaykh's later compositions. Actually Ibn 'Ajībah states that it was compiled from the Kitāb at-Tanwīr and the Latā'if.<sup>116</sup> It is hortatory

in tone and the emphasis on the basic virtues and adab makes it clear that "... it was intended for the general public, not the elite."<sup>117</sup> "In all likelihood, the Tāj al-'Arūs was put together by his disciples as an aide-memoire, a handy little manual of extracts from his other works . . ."<sup>118</sup>

Whether or not Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh or his disciples compiled the book, the content is obviously that of Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's thoughts and views. There can be no question but that it filled a definite need and function: the common man needed guidance as much as the spiritual elite, and Tāj al-'Arūs was the answer.

Another little known work is 'Unwān et-Tawfīq fī Adāb at-Tarīq, which is actually a commentary (sharḥ) on a poem (qaṣīdah) by the Sufi Shaykh Abū Madyan Shu'ayb al-Maghribī (d. 594/1197).<sup>119</sup> The qaṣīdah, composed of twenty-two verses, deals with the relationship of the novice to his shaykh and to the fuqarā', i.e., the other disciples. Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh takes this one step further with his sharḥ and expounds on each verse. In a clear and concise fashion, he discusses the mystical concepts of companionship and states that a true shaykh is harder to find than red sulphur or the phoenix.<sup>120</sup> With regard to the novice to whom the qaṣīdah is addressed, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh stresses the importance of repentance, humility, being careful about one's behavior (adab), and especially of associating with the fuqara--much like the previous work. He quotes the great spiritual masters 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561/1166) and Ibn al-'Arabī (560-638/1165-1240)<sup>121</sup> to support his point of view and even refers to his Hikam.<sup>122</sup>

The 'Unwān is a short piece evidently written sometime after the Kitāb al-Hikam when Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh was already a spiritual master. It

is in keeping with his other books on the importance and necessity of a spiritual guide and reveals his "knowledge of the sparse writings of the great Maghribī saint"<sup>123</sup> Abū Madyen as well as poetry, grammar, logic, Qur'ān, Prophetic tradition, and of course, the degree of his spiritual awareness.

As for Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's unpublished or unknown works, some are to be found in Brockelmann<sup>124</sup> or are mentioned by Arab biographers.<sup>125</sup> However, as noted by Danner, "Some of these treatises have been given generic titles, as if they were independent works; others are imbedded in still larger collections containing compositions by other authors; [or are] simple extractions from one of Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's better known books."<sup>126</sup> Even the poetry that he wrote has only survived as but a few lines scattered here and there in various works or quoted by other biographers.<sup>127</sup>

While the greater part of Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's works have remained unpublished and therefore largely unknown, others have been completely lost with only titles as reminders. Nevertheless, on the basis of his published books and extant manuscripts, we may conclude that these, too, would likewise have attested to his prolificness, variety of expertise, degree of perspicacity and spiritual discernment, the esteem in which he was held, and the respect accorded his writings by both his contemporaries and succeeding generations.

#### Miftāh el-Falāh wa Miṣbāh al-Arwāh

Of all Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's writings, one of his most informative and most crucial for our knowledge of Shādhilī mystical practices and methods is the Miftāh al-Falāh wa Miṣbāh al-Arwāh.<sup>128</sup> Like the Qaṣd al-Mujarrad previously discussed, it is a work on the dhikr'illāh. Yet unlike the Qaṣd, whose focus is on the remembrance of the Divine Name of Allāh, the Miftāh el-Falāh deals with the Shādhilī principles and all possible manner and ways of invoking, the variety of techniques used, and the benefits derived from so doing.

The translation which follows is based on a master copy made from the collation of the photocopies of two manuscripts from Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, No. 44262, dated 1050 (1640-41) and No. 52746, dated 1273 (1856-57) and from the 1381/1961 Cairo edition first published by Maṭba'ah Muṣṭafā el-Bābī al-Ḥalebī. This edition of 141 pages is obviously based on yet another manuscript dated 861 (1456-57), because at times all three have variant readings. The aim of collating was to obtain an intelligible rendering of the three texts. Consequently, it is not to be regarded as an exhaustive critical recension.

The older manuscript, No. 44262, seems closest to the published text and is in good condition overall. The first fifty-seven pages are written in a very compact Naskhī script. Then the handwriting switches to a Maghribī script, which takes some readjusting to become accustomed to, as if an apprentice with a less fine hand might have taken over. Then it reverts to the original handwriting from pages 102-111. Perhaps the master copier had returned to guarantee and seal his work. At any rate, both scripts are difficult to read in places, and there are the inevitable blurred words and faded lines due to the passage of time.

Like the Ceiro edition, this manuscript ends with a section from Muḥyi'd-Dīn b. al-'Arabī's al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah.<sup>129</sup>

As to the state of the other manuscript, No. 52746, it is 187 pages in length and in excellent condition--much clearer than the first one--and written in a fine uniform Naskhī hand. However, there are grammatical errors to be found as in the other two texts, but unlike them, it does not end with the section from Ibn al-'Arabī's Futūḥāt.

In collecting the three texts, normally two out of three usually agreed, if not all three, which facilitated reading a difficult or hastily written word or choosing the best word. Yet in spite of having such controls, there were a few instances when each text had a different verb, all synonyms of each other, or a different noun, each a species of insect! At such moments one could only make a decision based upon which manuscript tended to be the most consistently correct, since grammatical or spelling mistakes as well as variant readings of prepositions are to be seen in all the texts.

The structure of the Miftāḥ is, as stated by Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā Allāh, "arranged . . . into two parts: Part One has an introduction, sections (fusūl), chapters (abwāb) and foundations (uṣūl); Part Two has sections and chapters."<sup>130</sup> However, on closer examination, one finds that many of the divisions seem rather haphazardly made and perhaps are no more than stopping and starting points for his thoughts. For example, Part One is not actually delineated except as mentioned in the above quote contained in the book's Preface. Within this first part are three sections with no apparent separateness of ideas to warrant such subdivisions. Section three, which is so numbered for the convenience of the reader, is seen to be further subdivided into two foundations, the second of which is still further broken down into sections with titles

for the first two but not the third. All this is before coming to chapter one--again numbered for the benefit of the reader but not done in the original text.

The first chapter contains two sections with titles before coming to another subsection which the author calls the "third foundation," rather than the first. In other words, Ibn 'Aṭā Allāh considers it to be a continuation of the two foundations in Part One instead of the first foundation in chapter one. Yet in terms of content, it is totally unrelated. The first two foundations deal with proofs from the Qur'ān and Sunnah regarding the merit of invoking while the third deals with sincerity of belief. The latter heading is also divided into categories called al-qism al-awwal and al-qism eth-thānī<sup>131</sup> which have titles. Section three ends this chapter. Here the three main sections (fusūl) appear as separate and appropriate subthemes of the main heading.

Chapter two, however, is quite short and without any subdivisions. Chapter three is divided into two sections but this subdivision seems to be pointless since the entire chapter deals with the spiritual benefits attached to each particular Divine Attribute. Again like chapter two, chapter four has no subsections. Chapter five contains one untitled section and chapter six, none. Chapter seven is very short also with one untitled section. It seems that the above-mentioned sections of both chapters five and seven are rather arbitrarily arranged and more indicative of what would normally amount to a change of paragraph.

Chapter eight contains four sections, only the first of which is titled. However, in this case, sections two and three appear as separate categories insofar as they focus on different facets of tawḥīd,

while section four shifts its emphasis to the dangers of traveling on the spiritual path. Chapter nine is not subdivided.

Part Two noticeably changes its format in that it is one long text composed of nine sections, followed by a conclusion and then chapter ten. Sections one, two, and seven each have headings and are of such length that they could very easily have been separate chapters. The first fasl contains nine numbered discussions--each called a baḥṭh--on the sacred formula Lā ilāha illa'llāh, whereas the second one goes into a lengthy exposition on the Oneness of God, listing eighteen proofs. As to the seventh section, it deals with the names and meanings of Lā ilāha illa'llāh.

The eighth though untitled focuses on the etymology of the word ilāh, similar to the discussion found in al-Qaṣd al-Mujarrad.<sup>132</sup> The remaining sections three to six and nine are much shorter and only the fifth one has any headings.

The conclusion is primarily a collection of those traditions that deal with the subject of dhikr, but it is also subdivided into a section without a heading, which is merely a continuation of the previous ḥadīth. Hence, such divisions seem superfluous. This is followed by a rubric about asking for forgiveness on Fridays, but it is not called a fasl.

Chapter ten, oddly enough, follows the conclusion and it, too, is essentially more of the same traditions of the Prophet. The first section is the longest, with more ḥadīth about invoking; the second one deals with what to say when traveling. Although the third section has no heading, its subject matter is the ḥadīth to be recited in times of illness and affliction.

If the structure of the Miftāḥ al-Falāḥ seems at times uneven, not so the content. For here Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā'Allāh's mastery of the Qur'ān, Traditions, and sayings of the Companions, saints, and mystics combine with his expertise in Arabic grammar, poetry, logic, law, Mālikī fiqh and uṣūl to produce a unique work of simple but moving prose on the doctrine of tawḥīd, its importance, necessity, and benefits for the individual, and the method of spiritual realization, viz., the dhikru'llāh.

In the Sheykh's own words, he acknowledges that he wrote the book for two reasons: (1) because he had never seen "an adequate and complete book or . . . a clear and comprehensive treatise" on the subject and (2) because he was asked to do so "by a pious brother."<sup>133</sup> As a result, his stated purpose is to "facilitate understanding of the remembrance of God," elucidate any obscurities, "steer the seeker away from difficulties," and make "the book accessible to those desirous of spiritual gifts . . ."<sup>134</sup> In other words, Ibn 'Aṭā'Allāh took it upon himself to set down in writing for posterity spiritual directions which would serve as lights to guide the seeker out of the darkness of spiritual ignorance and death. Clearly he was a very learned and well read scholar, so the obvious conclusion one must draw is that this work represents the first of its kind devoted exclusively to the doctrine and method of the dhikru'llāh.

The Introduction begins with a general overview of the meaning and nature of the dhikru'llāh which Ibn 'Aṭā'Allāh simply defines as "the repetition of the Name of the Invoked by the heart and the tongue."<sup>135</sup> He provides examples of invoking which include remembering God or one of His attributes, commandments, deeds or mentioning His Name, or reciting the Qur'ān. He offers types of dhākiras such as the theologian, faqīh,

teacher, mufti, and so forth. The Shaykh elaborates further by differentiating among degrees of dhikr, whether with the tongue, heart, or body, whether in secret or in public, whether restricted by Sacred Law such as the times of prayer or unrestricted, and other nuances. Then Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh delves into a more detailed discussion of the definition and scope of dhikr. He emphasizes its different aspects like an artist painting a canvas, first concentrating on one thing, then another and returning to add touches until each part combines to create a complete idea or picture.

In the beginning, remembrance is with the tongue with effort and when invoking takes over, the body experiences subtle changes.<sup>136</sup> There are degrees of invoking which culminate in the so-called "hidden invocation," i.e., when one becomes so absorbed that one is no longer aware of oneself. This is self-extinction or fanā'. The lowest level is invoking God aloud, then with the heart, soul, spirit, intellect ('aql), and ultimately with one's "innermost Self" (sirr). Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh mentions the corresponding panoply of creation which invokes simultaneously with the dhākir.

He moves on to describe the three kinds of souls: the soul that incites to evil (an-nafs al-ammārah bi's-sū'), the self-blaming soul (an-nafs al-lawwāmah), and the recollected soul (an-nafs al-mutma'innah) with all their tendencies. To support his comments, he then furnishes proofs from the Qur'ān and Sunnah as well as sayings from the Companions and other recognized spiritual authorities. An example of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's grammatical expertise comes through in his discussion of the etymology of the word al-mufarridūn (pious recluses) in connection with one of the āḥādīth. The last section of the

Introduction deals with the preferred status of the invoker over others. Again āḥādīth are cited.

In chapter one, the Shaykh relates several āḥādīth on the merits of invoking in a low or loud voice and the importance of invoking constantly. He inserts anecdotes from pious individuals and authorities. Under "Third Foundation" Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh expounds on the meaning of sincerity with regard to conduct and belief--whether the motive behind a deed is spiritual or egocentric or a combination of the two--and describes each. His knowledge of logic is readily apparent here. He concludes with a discussion of the adab associated with invoking, i.e., what the seeker must do to prepare himself: from disciplining himself and withdrawing from the world, to eating lawfully and dressing appropriately, to how he must conduct himself during the ceremony of dhikr--how to sit, what to say, and how to behave at its conclusion. This section is one of the most interesting for its insights into the Shadhili method of invoking, the importance of the Sbahādah, and the rigorous discipline which a novice was expected to undergo.<sup>137</sup>

Chapter two focuses on the many fruits of invoking briefly mentioned in the Introduction and enumerates the physical, emotional, and spiritual benefits to the dhākir and the importance of the spiritual formulas in leading to redemption and gnosis. "Of all deeds there is none more redemptive from chastisement of God, who possesses Majesty, than the invocation . . . The invocation is a tree whose fruit is gnosis."<sup>138</sup>

In chapter three Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh develops the subject of the benefits of invoking even further, taking it in another direction, which is unique among his writings and indicative of his spiritual mastery. He presents some of the Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names of God (al-Asmā' al-

Husnā) indicating the particular spiritual remedy which invoking each Name will produce and for what type of individual each Name is best suited, whether novice, intermediate, or advanced disciple and at what level. He also warns that each remedy or Divine Name, like a physical prescription, is for a certain illness of the soul and should not be used in connection with another. For example, invoking repeatedly al-ʿAlīm (the Knower) brings vigilance.

This discourse was obviously not meant for the novice but rather as a guide to meditational practices. Since Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh composed this work for his disciples to facilitate the journey and some of them became shaykhs themselves, it could be reasonably argued that this esoteric information was for the benefit of those rare enlightened individuals who were destined to guide others.

If focusing inwardly on God through constant remembrance is of utmost importance for drawing closer to Him, then choosing the right type of invocation is a profoundly serious matter. Chapter four elaborates on the various possible sacred formulas and expressions which the seeker may use and the significance of each. He cites arguments in favor of one or the other but ultimately the question is not one of preference but one of appropriateness. The choice, for example, between invoking Lā ilāha illaʾllāh or simply Allāh or Hū depends upon the seeker's spiritual state. "Each invocation has its own state and time wherein it is better than another type of remembrance."<sup>139</sup>

But how to determine which is best at a given moment requires an extraordinarily discerning teacher as described in the next chapter. Here in chapter five Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh explicates the central role of a realized spiritual master or Sufi shaykh in guiding the seeker, the

importance of finding and obeying such a person, the necessity of discipline and virtuous conduct, and the diverse types of spiritual paths. This chapter is essentially a recapitulation of what has already been stated. He reiterates the blessings to be had through reciting the prayer upon the Prophet and recommends that the novice begin with that.

The last section concentrates on how to actually begin the process of repentance and turning toward God--in other words, how to prepare in order to take the first step of the spiritual journey. This is similar to the earlier discussion on the adab associated with invoking in chapter one. However, the difference here is that the Shaykh's attention is on the manner of dealing with an absolute beginner, i.e., one who asks to enter such a discipline and such an order. Hence, for Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh, the nature, background, and temperament of the novice must be evaluated before assigning him any spiritual exercises. Whether he is learned or simple, equilibrated or hot-tempered, has led an immoral or moral life are all factors to be taken into consideration when deciding on the type of invocation and the number of its repetitions. "Fruits [of invoking] vary according to individuals; but they derive from one source."<sup>140</sup>

Then he moves on to the actual manner of invoking: how to sit, what to say, the necessity of confiding in one's shaykh and reciting a morning and evening litany (wird). The significance of constantly invoking the Divine Name inwardly until it becomes second nature, as it were, for the individual is continually emphasized. From this Sbādhilī discipline and method, Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh goes on to describe other more rigorous ways such as that of Shaykh al-Junayd.<sup>141</sup>

A concomitant of the path is the spiritual retreat (khalwah). Chapter six defines the retreat and enumerates its salutary benefits to

the soul and its purpasa. Forgetfulness (ghaflah) in the heart is likened to rust on a mirror, a popular imagery in Sufism. Only by polishing it can the mirror shine as it was originally intended. So too with the heart. Invoking, espacially in solituda and aided by fasting removes forgetfulness and worldly attachments and helps the soul to focus on God, as it was meant to do--when man was God's khalīfah on earth.

Ibn 'Atā'Allāh discusses the preparation and procedure to follow before going into a reatraat, sinca it is not an easy thing to do. This is yet another aspect of the adab of invoking previously mentioned, particularly in chapters one and five. From the importance of solitude and right intention, the Shaykh moves on to an actual description of the physical structure and dimensions of the cell used for the initiate's retreat and the conditions for undertaking it. He even explains how to eat, the proper type of clothing to wear, and parsonal hygiene. In short, Ibn 'Atā'Allāh provides us with further insights into the Shād-hillī method of conducting a retreat and the value of each part to the whola.

Once the manner of a retreat has been established, the Shaykh turns his attantion suddenly to delineate the difference between angelic and satanic inspirations and the four categories of suggestions that often come over a disciple. Starting from the highest, the divine, to the lowest, the satanic, Ibn 'Atā'Allāh interprets the accompanying feelings of each. Divine and angelic inspirations produce calm and bliss due to their proximity to God, while psychical (hājīs) and satanic (waswās) suggestions leave the soul agitated due to their being closer to passion and contrary to the Sacred Law.

The central theme of tawhīd, God's Oneness, is the focus of chapter seven. Quoting the great Shaykh al-Ghazālī<sup>142</sup> on the nature of tawhīd, Ibn 'Atā'Allāh expounds upon it and the varying degrees of people's awareness. He concludes this short chapter with the revelation that "all creatures affirm the Oneness of God Most High in accordance with the subtleness of their 'breaths'."<sup>143</sup> This universality of remembrance is supported by a verse from the Qur'ān and refers to every kind and species including nonliving things.

Invoking, whether in the midst of one's daily tasks or in solitude, is the best form of worship because it is meant to be continuous. Gnosis (ma'rifah) is its fruit. In chapter eight Ibn 'Atā'Allāh defines ma'rifah as "the perception of something as it is in its essence and attributes."<sup>144</sup> It is of two types: genaral and particular, the latter arising from contemplation and leading to certitude. He adds that what distinguishes one soul from another after death is its degree of knowledge and awareness gained in this life.

Its discernment in the Hereafter is not greater than its discernment in this world except in terms of unveiling and clarity. Contemplation and vision will be commensurate with one's knowledge of God Most High . . . because gnosis in this world will be transformed in the Hereafter as a contemplative vision. . . .<sup>145</sup>

Section one of this chapter, as its title clearly states, deals with the question of whether invoking or reciting the Qur'ān is better. Ibn 'Atā'Allāh again quotes al-Ghazālī who states under which conditions reciting the Qur'ān is preferable. Then Ibn 'Atā'Allāh offers additional support by citing several āhādīth. Yet deftly as he argues in favor of the Qur'ān, the Shaykh just as skillfully returns to al-Ghazālī to cite the opposite view, viz., that "when the servant is not in need

of refining his character and attaining gnostic knowledge . . . then perseverance in the invocation is more suitable."<sup>146</sup> In other words, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's spiritual mastery is such that he also argues convincingly in favor of the invocation of various Divine Names and sacred formulae, especially the formula Lā ilāha illa'llāh, which he expatiates on in section two.

As for section three, it continues with an explication of the variety of types of invocations and the efficacy of each; however, the Shahādah is considered the best. ". . . it is evident that a certain probability attaches to the claim of the person who holds that saying Allāh, Allāh, or Huwa, Huwa is the most special invocation, for it is among the sum of expressions of which Lā ilāha illa'llāh is the best, according to the knowers of God."<sup>147</sup> An admonition to show compassion and mercy to all creation ends this division.

Section four shifts its focus to the dangers inherent in traveling on the spiritual path--the illusions a novice may have--as well as the signs and blessings of proximity to God. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh enumerates a range of emotional and spiritual states indicative of the servant's standing with God, e.g., "The signs of devotion to God are three: abandoning choice, rejecting self-determination, and denying self-willing."<sup>148</sup> It is as if this last part were meant to serve as a gauge for reflection and self-examination and perhaps to help the murshid evaluate the progress of the murīd.

Chapter nine, the last chapter in Part One, develops yet another aspect of adab, viz., the ideal conduct expected of the advanced initiate, which goes beyond the Golden Rule of "do unto others . . ." Here the emphasis is on dealing with oneself, the spiritual attitudes and

practices to adopt, the conditions one must undergo to discipline and purify one's soul of egocentric and worldly attachments.

The Sufi is to be rigorous and abstemious with himself, know and follow the Sharī'ah, defer to those higher in rank in the ṭarīqah, follow his shaykh's instructions completely, be content with his lot, and share his goods. Vis-à-vis outsiders, he should be compassionate and nonjudgmental, offer help when needed, withdraw from distracting company or influences, yet not deem himself better than others. He should lead an examined life, guard his tongue, and strive to remove worldly concerns from his heart. In short, the Sufi must focus inwardly on God, put others before himself, and be in the world but not of the world. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh has obviously written a prescription for saintly people, the practice of which can only be for a select spiritual elite.

Part Two, unlike Part One, is divided into major sections that would normally be seen as chapters. The first section contains nine subsections called discussions on the nature of the phrase Lā ilāha illa'llāh from different levels of reality and including grammatical and philosophical points of view. The Shaykh's expertise in grammar and logic, not to mention the Qur'ān and Sunnah, is unquestionable as he presents one argument after another, dissecting all the possible nuances of meaning of the formula of tawḥīd.

Beginning with the first discussion, he gives a short grammatical analysis of the negative particle lā; in the second, the various philosophical and religious ramifications of the phrase Lā ilāha illa'llāh with regard to tawḥīd. The third returns to a grammatical explanation of the word Allāh which is in the nominative case and therefore in apposition to lā.



In the fourth discussion, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh continues with an analysis of illā, explaining that it signifies gheyr (other than) in the phrase, rather than exception. The fifth discussion further elucidates this idea through philosophical reasoning to show that the phrase Lā ilāhe ille'llāh actually means negation of other deities instead of affirmation of God's existence.

As for the sixth discussion, it is an elaboration of the first but concerns the lā of absolute negation. According to Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, it is a more forceful negation, because the noun governed by lā, in this case, ilāhe, is in the accusative which is more emphatic than a noun in the nominative case. The seventh discussion opens with a philosophical explanation of how affirmation normally precedes negation. Then Ibn 'Atā' Allāh points out how its opposite in the phrase Lā ilāha ille'llāh indicates emphasis as well as spiritual symbolism.

In the eighth discussion the Shaykh stresses the importance of knowing, for the sake of salvation, that there is only One God. The ninth discussion enumerates the different conditions under which one should recite the invocation of tawhīd. These evolve by degrees from orally declaring the phrase to inwardly doing so and combining therewith arguments and proofs which strengthen belief.

Section two of Part Two sets out to establish that there can only be One God, not two in partnership. Ibn 'Atā' Allāh furnishes eighteen proofs based on traditional and intellectual arguments, some of which are quite subtle. Once more his expertise in philosophy and logic in addition to his religious and spiritual formation come to the fore as he responds to every conceivable or hypothetical question. For the modern reader, the positing of such proofs for the existence of One God as opposed to two seems a bit strange, if not naive, since the problem

today would be one of belief in One God versus atheism. Furthermore, most people do not look upon ambition or the pursuit of status, power, or wealth as gods. Nevertheless, the Sheykh's reasoning and argumentation are impressive and reveal his immense range of knowledge and spiritual awareness. Naturally the highest appeal to proof in God's Unity is the Qur'ān, and in the eighteenth and final proof, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh enumerates and comments upon several verses.

In section three earlier Sufi authorities are quoted who confirm the significance of Lā ilāhe ille'llāh and its unique salvational function. Sections four and five continue to develop this theme and emphasize that invoking the spiritual formula is incumbent upon all Muslims. Stories and verses from the Qur'ān, ḥadīth, and anecdotes about the Companions and other historical persons constantly support Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's beliefs in the necessity and transforming power of invoking the profession of God's Oneness.

In section six the Sheykh provides commentary upon the different meanings of the formula Lā ilāha ille'llāh and interprets the symbolism of the number of letters making up the phrase. In section seven he amplifies on yet another dimension in his treatise by focusing on the names describing, or synonymous with, the Testimony of Faith, such as tawhīd, ikhlas (sincerity of faith), ihṣān (virtue), and 'adl (justice). With each of the nineteen names, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh interprets its relationship to the Shahādah, thus again affirming the latter's uniqueness among the formulas of remembrance.

The etymology of the word Allāh is discussed in section eight in similar fashion to the author's exposition in al-Qaṣd al-Mujerred.<sup>149</sup> The Sheykh begins by defining el-ilāh (the deity) and then explains that

the word Allāh, according to certain scholars, is considered a derivative. He presents their differing arguments: that it originates either from the verbs aliha or waliha or laha. Then he gives opposing comments by others who say that the word Allāh is not a derivative. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh agrees with this latter explanation and carries it another step, viz., that it is neither a derivative nor a proper noun since nouns describe, and the word Allāh is greater than the sum total of all the Ninety-Nine Names. Hence, it is a name which refers to Essence and not a quality to be described.

Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh adds that the Name Allāh was not used among the Arabs before or after the time of the Prophet Muḥammad for anything other than to indicate this Supreme Essence, i.e., not for any of His Attributes. From this highly interesting discourse, he interjects seven principles that the seeker should observe in order to draw closer to God and concludes with a symbolic interpretation of the letters in the Name Allāh without any further explanation.

Section nine introduces a couple of anecdotes whose purpose is to show the importance and effect of reciting Lā ilāhe illa 'llāh. The second one is so indicated through the mention of both the adhān and iqāmah which contain this formula. Next, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh proceeds to illustrate the symbolism of the entire Shahādah, according to the number of its individual letters and words, then the symbolism of the first part only, according to its number of letters. From this he turns to the pronoun Hū, which esoterically represents both "He," meaning God, and His Divine Essence<sup>150</sup> and likewise interprets the mystery of its letters. As a seeming afterthought, the Shaykh ends with an explanation of the meaning of Subḥāna 'llāh wa bi-ḥamdihī, an invocation of praise to God.

The Conclusion (khātimah) of the book appears to have been misplaced because a final chapter succeeds it. At any rate it contains many āḥādīth about invoking during times of difficulty or distress. Several of the Companions are mentioned. Section one is more restricted to āḥādīth dealing with asking for forgiveness, while the next division is still more so and focuses specifically on āḥādīth related to asking for forgiveness on Fridays, obviously considered the most propitious day of the week.

Chapter ten, the last one, begins with an obscure incantation against snake bites that seems like an afterthought or digression. Then more āḥādīth follow like those previously mentioned in the Conclusion. As if to summarize all that has been said about the importance of invoking God's Name or one of the sacred formulas containing His Name, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh again enumerates many Qur'ānic verses and āḥādīth in section one related to it, particularly remembering God in the morning and evening, often with a prescribed result such as protection for oneself and/or one's family from illness, disaster, or hellfire. As is the norm, the names of Companions and traditionists are included as authorities who either witnessed the Prophet's telling or performing of such an act or who received the information from a reliable source or sources.

Interspersed among them are various traditions, some related to remembering God on Fridays, which would have been more appropriately inserted with those in the Conclusion, or related to invoking at unrestricted times, or even ones repeated from other chapters in the text. But no matter, for to Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, they all serve the same purpose, viz., to enable the seeker to realize that the religion, especially

through the Sunnah of the Prophet, provides the means to protect and guide the sincere servant back to God in the easiest, quickest, and safest manner possible.

In section two the Shaykh sets down the āḥādīth to be used in times of travel. To repeat the formulas is to be protected from the dangers of calamity, predatory animals, and criminals associated with journeying. Likewise with health: section three focuses on the conditions of illness and provides āḥādīth which instruct the believer in how to conduct himself when visiting the sick, what to say, and how to alleviate one's own illness. It then concludes with a few traditions related more to misfortune than sickness.

The Miftāḥ is written in a clear, lucid style as are all the works of Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh. Although well-known, the book does not seem to enjoy the widespread popularity of the Kitāb al-Ḥikam, especially in view of all the commentaries on the latter. Yet the Miftāḥ is unprecedented for the light it sheds on the central role and scope of the dhikru'llāh in the Shādhilī ṭarīqah and the adab and practices associated with invoking, such as the retreat (khalwah). "The Miftāḥ al-Falāḥ is considered among the most important works of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh from the standpoint that it contains the principles of the actual Sufi mystical practices such as dhikr, seclusion, and retreat."<sup>151</sup>

The Miftāḥ offers a glimpse into the Sufi world of the seventh/thirteenth centuries and allows us to see almost firsthand how the novice was guided, the central function of the Sufi shaykh, the adab expected, the manner of interaction and, above all, the purpose and preparation involved in engaging in the dhikru'llāh. Since salvation

was taken quite seriously in the traditional world, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh sets forth at once to define dhikr, to explain its nature and power, to state the results it bestows, and to prove that it is part of the Sunnah. Obviously, the fact that he had been so anti-Sufi himself plays a large part in this. As a result, he no doubt must have known that many others looked upon taḡawwuf as some sort of aberration, if not bid'a. Therefore, he takes great pains to point out the many Qur'ānic verses and āḥādīth that refer to remembering God and cites many noted authorities. Perhaps, too, it was written to counteract the formalistic trend within Islam as well as within Sufism.<sup>152</sup>

Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh was not the first to write about the importance of the dhikr in Sufism, nor the last. Others before him, such as 'Abd al-Karīm b. Hawāzin al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1074) in his Risālah, al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) in his Ihyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn, Najm ad-Dīn al-Kubrā (d. 618/1221) in his Fawā'id al-Jamāl wa Fawā'id al-Jalāl, and Ibn al-'Arabī (d. 638/1240) in his al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah also discuss it. In fact, a few passages in the Miftāḥ are taken from al-Kubrā's Fawā'id al-Jamāl.<sup>153</sup> However, this should not be construed as plagiarism since what is foremost in the religion is the Truth rather than who said it. That is the reason why throughout his work, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh often says, "It has been said" or "One of the gnostics has said" rather than stating the name of each person quoted. Moreover, these few passages which amount to perhaps three or four pages are sometimes cited verbatim and sometimes paraphrased.

In any case, where he differs from the above spiritual masters is that he devotes an entire book to the subject instead of a few pages or a chapter and systematically explains all the nuances of the contemplative prayer. "Rare are the works in Sufism that deal with the

comprehensive aspects of invocation (dhikr) more thoroughly or succinctly than the Miftāh of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh.<sup>154</sup>

Of all Sufi writers, he is the first to put down in writing the mysteries connected with an orally transmitted religious tradition. His works as a whole form an integral part of the corpus of Sufi literature, and his contribution is inestimable in the field of Sufi studies. He has provided posterity with historical details on the origins of the Shādhilī ṭarīqah, one of the largest Sufi orders of North Africa, including Egypt and parts of the Middle East, and information about its great founder, Sheykh Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī, and his immediate successor Sheykh Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī. Without him, no doubt, the Shādhilī order would most probably have been clouded in obscurity and legends and perhaps would have faded into oblivion.

Through his personal guidance and teaching, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh influenced hundreds of Sufis and non-Sufis in his lifetime. His stature and eminence as a Sufi and scholar was such that even the fuqahā' and historians have praised him.

Most of them [his biographers] were historians and biographers of the fuqahā'. There is no doubt that the testimonies of the historians and biographers of the fuqahā' are more indicative of his rank than are the testimonies of the Sufis themselves, because the former are usually less likely to be biased and to exaggerate in mentioning his virtues.<sup>155</sup>

By his writings, however, he has influenced untold thousands of Muslims down through the ages who became Shadhilī disciples, spiritual guides, and commentators on his works. They in turn continued the momentum of the teachings of the founder and quṭb Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan. Non-Muslims have not gone untouched by his life either.<sup>156</sup> Even now his books are

still being published in the Arab world and still affecting Muslim and non-Muslim, Arab and non-Arab alike, as witnessed by the various translations and studies made by both Arabs and Westerners.<sup>157</sup>

Although one has no way of gauging their numbers, there can be no question that the Shādhilī ṭarīqah, started in the seventh/thirteenth century, is alive and well, as evidenced by the continued publication of Shādhilī works. It has continued down to the present in an unbroken chain through its spiritual authorities. One of its last great shaykhs of the twentieth century was Ahmad al-'Alawī of Algeria, who died in 1934. He left behind several works and thousands of disciples,<sup>158</sup> one of whom was Muḥammad al-Ḥāshimī, author of Kitāb esh-Shatranj. The latter became a highly respected Sufi teacher in Damascus where he lived and guided many followers until his death in the last decade.

If one wonders how or why such a religious tradition could endure so long, one need only look to Islam which provides the framework for Sufism. The Qur'ān speaks of God as aẓ-Ẓāhir and el-Bātin. Exoteric Islam suffices for the generality of believers, but esoteric Islam or Sufism obviously addresses itself to some deeper need in the souls of pious Muslims. Islamic mysticism provides them with spiritual nourishment amid the instability of daily life, a continuum with their past heritage, and a more intense form of devotion harking back to the days of the Prophet.

IBN 'AṬĀ' ALLĀH'S

MIPTĀH AL-FALĀH WA MIṢBĀH AL-ARWĀH

[PREFACE]

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE COMPASSIONATE, THE MERCIFUL

May God bless our master Muḥammad, his family,  
and his companions, and grant them peace!

Praise be to God who opens sealed hearts through the remembrance of His name, who lifts the veils of defects through His righteousness, who purifies the innermost nature of hearts to confer upon them His own mysterious Self, who reveals wonders from the world of His power, and who increases the signs of abundance for those who are grateful to Him! I praise God for having made me one of those affirming His Oneness, and I thank Him, asking His grace and increased abundance. I also ask God's blessings on our master Muḥammed, the noblest of His servants, and on his family and companions, the possessors of great virtue and honor!

Now then, on to our subject: Verily, the remembrance of God Most High is the key of salvation and the lamp of souls, through the grace of God the Generous, the Victorious. The remembrance of God is the foundation of the Path and the pivotal support of realized sages. Yet I have never seen anyone who has written an adequate and complete book or compiled a clear and comprehensive treatise on it. That, together with the suggestion by a pious brother who likes to give sincere counsel, prompted me to compose a book wherein I have assembled those things that would facilitate understanding the remembrance of God and elucidated whatever is obscure in it. In so doing, I have steered the seeker away from difficulties and made the book accessible to those desirous of

spiritual gifts, hoping for reward for this effort from God, and praying for the seeker's success in his quest:

O traveler going toward the Protected Land,\*  
Forget me not upon alighting there!

Upon God Most High do I rely, and through Him am I helped: "There is no power nor strength save in God, the Lofty, the Supreme."

I have arranged this work into two parts: Part One has an introduction, sections, chapters, and principles; Part Two has sections and chapters.

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\* The reference is to the land of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

## [Part One]

### INTRODUCTION:

#### ON THE NATURE OF REMEMBRANCE AND ITS EXPLANATION

Remembrance of God is liberation from ignorance and forgetfulness through the permanent presence of the heart with the Truth. It has been said that it is the repetition of the Name of the Invoked by the heart and the tongue. It is alike whether it is God who is remembered, or one of His attributes, or one of His commandments, or one of His deeds, or whether one draws a conclusion based on any one of these. Remembering God may take the form of a supplication to Him, or the remembrance of His Messengers, Prophets, saints, or of anyone related to Him or close to Him in some way, or because of some deed, such as reciting the Qur'an, mentioning God's Name, poetry, singing, a conversation, or a story.

Therefore, the theologian is one who remembers God; the Muslim legal jurist is one who remembers God; the teacher is one who remembers God; the mufti is one who remembers God; and the preacher is one who remembers God. Anyone who meditates on the greatness and majesty and omnipotence of God Most High and on His signs in the heavens and the earth is one who remembers God. Whosoever observes what God has commanded and abstains from what God has forbidden is one who remembers God.

Remembrance may be with the tongue, the heart, or the members of the body. It may be practiced secretly or openly; but whosoever

combines all these forms has truly perfected it. Invoking with the tongue is remembrance of the letters of God's Name without presence of mind. It is the "outward remembrance," but it has great virtue as witnessed by the verses of the Qur'ān, the sayings of the Prophet, and the remarks of others that have been handed down. It may be either restricted by time and place or unrestricted.

That which is restricted is like the remembrance of God during and after the five daily prayers, the pilgrimage to Mecca, before sleep and after waking, before eating, upon riding a mount, in the morning and evening, and so forth.

That which is unrestricted is not confined by time or place nor moment nor spiritual state. To this latter type of remembrance belongs the glorification of God, as in each of the following formulas: "Glory be to God!" (subhāna 'llāh);<sup>1</sup> "Praise be to God!" (al-hamdu lillāh);<sup>2</sup> "There is no divinity but God" (Lā ilāha illa 'llāh);<sup>3</sup> "God is Most-Great!" (Allāhu Akbar);<sup>4</sup> and "There is no power or strength save in God, the Lofty, the Supreme" (Lā hawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh al-'Alī al-'Azīm).<sup>5</sup>

Then there is the remembrance which includes a supplication, such as "Our Lord, condemn us not if we forget or err,"<sup>6</sup> or a personal entreaty, as well as the expression "O God, bless our master Muhammad."<sup>7</sup> This has a greater effect on the heart of the novice than a remembrance that does not include an entreaty, because he who supplicates feels his heart close to the One whom he implores: remembrance touches his heart and envelops it with awe.

Other unrestricted forms of remembering God include being vigilant as well as requests dealing with this world or the Hereafter. Vigilance

is exemplified in such remarks of yours as "God is with me," "God is looking at me," "God sees me"; for there is within them a vigilant regard for the well-being of the heart. Truly, remembrance is used to strengthen one's presence with God Most High, to maintain the proper conduct toward Him, to guard against heedlessness, as a refuge from the accursed devil, and to help foster the attentiveness of the heart during acts of worship.

### Section [1]

There is no form of remembrance which does not have a result specifically associated with it; and any form practiced will bestow upon you whatever particular power it has. Invoking with receptivity and vigilance leads to illumination, but only in accordance with the invocation.

The Imām al-Ghazālī<sup>8</sup> has said,

Invocation is an inner reality in which the Invoked takes possession of the heart while the invoker is effaced and vanishes. But it has three coverings, one closer to the kernel than the others. The kernel as such is beyond the three coverings, yet the virtue of the coverings lies in their being the way to the kernel.

The uppermost covering is remembrance with the tongue only. The invoker unceasingly invokes with his tongue, striving for the presence of the heart simultaneously, since the heart must consent to be present in the invocation. If it were left to its own nature, it would certainly wander through the valleys of thought until it joined the

<sup>8</sup> Persons mentioned throughout the text are identified in the Appendix, pp. 258 ff.

tongue; and then the light of the heart would burn away passions and evil spirits. Its own invocation would take hold and that of the tongue would become weaker; the body and soul would become filled with light; and the heart would be purified of other-than-God. At this stage temptations cease and there is no abode for the devil. The heart becomes a receptacle for inspirations and a polished mirror able to reflect divine revelations and gnostic perceptions. When remembrance permeates the heart and diffuses throughout the body, then every member of the body invokes God commensurate with its spiritual state.

Al-Jurayrī said, "One of our friends used to say Allāh, Allāh frequently. One day a tree trunk fell on his head and fractured his skull. The blood spilled on the ground spelling Allāh, Allāh."

#### Section [2]

Remembrance is like a fire that neither stays nor spreads. When it enters a house, it says, "It is I; there is no one else but Me," which is one of the meanings of "There is no divinity but God." If it finds kindling inside, it consumes it and becomes fire. If it finds darkness therein, it becomes light, thus illuminating the house. If there is already a light in the house, then it becomes "light upon light."<sup>8</sup>

Likewise with the body: invoking removes from it impure substances which are due to intemperance in eating or result from consuming forbidden foods. As for what is obtained from lawful food, it does not affect it. When the injurious parts are burned away and the sound parts remain, every part will be heard invoking as if the trumpet had been blown.<sup>9</sup>

At first remembrance occurs in the area of the head, so it is there that you will experience the sound of cymbals and horns. Invoking is powerful: when it descends into a place, it does so with its horns and cymbals, because the invocation is against everything except the Truth. When it settles in some place, it actively seeks to expel its opposite, as we find in the combination of water and fire. After these sounds, you hear various others, such as the rippling of water, the wind blowing, fire blazing, the sound of the windmill, horses galloping, and leaves rustling in the wind.

The reason for this is due to the fact that man is composed of every substance, both noble and base, from soil and water, fire and air, and heaven and earth; these sounds are between these pairs. Every element and basic nature belongs to these substances. Whosoever has heard something of these sounds glorifies God and declares Him holy with his whole tongue. That is the result of invoking with the tongue with the force of total absorption. Perhaps the servant will reach the stage where, if he should stop invoking orally, his heart will stir in his breast seeking remembrance, like the movements of an unborn child in the womb of his mother.

Some have said that the heart is like Jesus, son of Mary (on him be peace!), and the remembrance his breast milk. When the heart grows and becomes strong, there arises in it a longing for the Truth as well as sighs and compulsive pangs of yearning for the invocation and the Invoked. The invocation of the heart is similar to the buzzing of a bee, not a loud, disturbing sound, nor hidden and mysterious. When the Invoked takes possession of the heart and the invocation is effaced and disappears, the invoker should not pay attention to the remembrance nor



to the heart. If he should do so, then they would become a distracting veil.

This is self-extinction: that a man be extinguished from himself. Therefore, he does not feel anything in his limbs nor anything exterior to himself nor any inner phenomena. Rather he is oblivious to all that, and all that vanishes from him as he goes, first, to his Lord, then comes back again to himself. Should it occur to the invoker, during that time, that he is completely extinguished from himself, then that would be a flaw and an opaqueness. For perfection is to be effaced from oneself and from the state of extinction. Hence, extinction from the state of extinction is the goal of extinction. Extinction is the beginning of the path: it is traveling to God Most High. Guidance comes afterwards. What I mean by guidance is the guidance of God, as described by the Friend of God, Abraham: "Lo! I am going unto my Lord who will guide me."<sup>10</sup>

This total absorption rarely remains or lasts. If the invoker perseveres, it will become a deeply-rooted habit and a permanent state by which he may ascend to the highest domains. In this state of absorption, he may look upon pure, real Being and be imprinted with the nature of the invisible Realm (al-Malakūt) and have the holiness of the Divinity (al-Lāhūt) revealed to him. The first thing that is manifested to the invoker in that domain is the essence of the angels and the spirits of the Prophets and saints, and this, in beautiful forms through which certain realities overflow upon him. That is the beginning, until his degree of realization is higher than the prototypal forms and he encounters the self-evidence of the Truth in everything.

This is the fruit of the essence of invoking. Its beginning is only with the tongue; then comes invocation with the heart with effort;

then comes invocation with the heart naturally; then comes possession of the heart by the Invoked and the effacement of the invoker. This is the secret of the hadīth of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!): "Whosoever wishes to feast in the gardens of Paradise, then let him remember God frequently"<sup>11</sup> as well as the hadīth: "Hidden remembrance is seventy-fold better than the remembrance which the guardian angels hear."

The sign of the invocation's reaching the innermost Self is the absence of the invoker from both the invocation and the Invoked. The invocation of the Self (dhikru's-sirr) is ecstasy and drowning in It. Amongst its signs is that when you quit the invocation, it does not quit you. That is the exaltation of the invocation in you that rouses you from absence of mind to presence of mind. Another of its signs is the feeling that your head and limbs are bound as if you were shackled with chains. Still another sign is that its fires never abate nor do its spiritual lights disappear. Rather, you will always see lights ascending and others descending, while the fires are around you, pure, blazing, and burning. When the invocation reaches the innermost center of consciousness at the moment the invoker becomes silent, the invocation becomes like a needle piercing his tongue or as if his whole face were a tongue invoking through a profuse light.

Subtle point: Know that every remembrance that your heart is conscious of is heard by the guardian angels. Their awareness unites with your awareness. Therein lies a mystery: when your invocation is absent from your consciousness by your total absorption in the Invoked, your remembrance is also absent from the consciousness of the guardian angels.

Note: Invoking the letters of God's Name without presence of mind is invocation of the tongue; invoking with presence of mind is invocation of the heart; and invoking with an absence of self-awareness because of absorption in the Invoked is the invocation of the Self—this is the hidden invocation!

### Section [3]

Sustenance of the outer man comes from the movements of the body; sustenance of the inner man comes from the movements of the heart; spiritual sustenance of one's most interior being is through tranquility; and sustenance of the intellect is through extinction of one's consciousness of tranquility, so that the servant is tranquil for God and with God. There is no nourishment in food for the spirit, for it sustains physical forms. But the sustenance of the spirit and the heart is the remembrance of the God, the Knower of the Invisible. God Most High has said, "Those who believe and whose hearts have rest in the remembrance of God: verily in the remembrance of God do hearts find rest!"<sup>12</sup>

When you invoke God Most High, all who hear you invoke with you, because you invoke with your tongue, then with your heart, then with your soul, then with your spirit, then with your intellect, then with your innermost Self. All of that is one invocation. When you invoke God Most High with your tongue, all inanimate things invoke with the invocation of your tongue. When you invoke with your heart, the universe and all of God's worlds therein invoke with your heart. When you invoke with your soul, the heavens and all therein invoke with you. When you invoke with your spirit, the Pedestal of God and all of its

worlds invoke with you. When you invoke with your intellect, the bearers of the Throne, the angels, archangels, and the spirits drawn near to God, all of whom circumambulate the Throne, invoke with you. When you invoke with your innermost Self, the Throne, with all of its worlds, invokes with you until the invocation is united with the Essence.

Addendum: The breath (nafas) is the subtle, ethereal substance which carries the life force, sensory perception, and volitional movement. Al-Hakim called it "the animal spirit"; it is the intermediate between the heart, which is the rational soul, and the body. It is said that the soul is referred to in the venerable Qur'an as the olive tree that is described as being blessed—"neither of the East nor of the West"<sup>13</sup>--because the soul confers a greater rank on man and because it effects his purification, for it is neither from the East of the world of pure spirits nor from the West of the world of material bodies. It is of three types: the one that incites to evil; the self-blaming one; and the recollected one.

The soul that incites to evil (ammārah bi's-sū') is that which inclines to physical nature and commands one to engage in sensual pleasures and carnal appetites. It draws the heart toward the lowest region and is the abode of inequity and the source of blameworthy morals and evil deeds. It is the soul of the masses. It is tenebrous; and for it, the invocation is like a lamp lit in a dark house.

The self-blaming soul (lawwāmah) is that which is illuminated by the light of the heart to an extent commensurate with its degree of wakefulness from the slumber of forgetfulness. It is vigilant and begins by correcting its state, which wavers between the Divinity and creatures. Every time something bad issues forth from the self-blaming soul by virtue of its dark nature and character, the light of divine

admonition suddenly comes upon it, and it starts blaming itself. The soul repents of its errors, asking God's pardon and returns to the door of the Forgiving, the Merciful. For this reason God has extolled it by mentioning it in His words (exalted be He!): "Nay, I swear by the Day of Resurrection; nay, I swear by the self-blaming soul."<sup>14</sup>

It is as if it saw itself in a house full of objectionable things, such as filth, dogs, pigs, panthers, tigers, or elephants, and it worked diligently to eliminate them, after having been soiled by the different impurities and injured by the various types of predatory animals. So the self-blaming soul perseveres in invoking and turning to God in repentance until the power of the invocation triumphs over all those things and expels them. Then the soul approaches peacefulness and does not cease to gather furnishings for the house until the house is adorned with all kinds of praiseworthy things and is thereby made lustrous. The house is then suitable for the descent of the Sovereign Lord into it. When the Sovereign Lord descends into the soul and the Truth is revealed, the soul becomes recollected.

The recollected soul (nutma'innah) is the one whose enlightenment is brought about by the light of the heart until it is stripped of blameworthy attributes and takes on praiseworthy virtues. Then it turns in the direction of the heart completely, following it in its ascent to the regions of the world of Holiness ('alem al-quds) far above the world of impurity, diligent in acts of obedience and tranquil in the presence of the "Exalter of ranks"<sup>15</sup> until its Lord addresses it by His words: "But ah! thou soul at peace! Return unto thy Lord, content in His good pleasure! Enter thou among My servants! Enter thou My Garden!"<sup>16</sup>

### First Foundation: Proofs from the Qur'ān

God Most High said, "O ye who believe! Remember God often with much remembrance. And glorify Him morning and evening."<sup>17</sup>

He Most High also said, "Such as remember God, standing, sitting, and reclining. . ."<sup>18</sup>

". . . and men who remember God much and women who remember--God hath prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward."<sup>19</sup>

"Therefore remember Me, I will remember you."<sup>20</sup>

"Those who believe and whose hearts have rest in the remembrance of God: verily in the remembrance of God do hearts find rest!"<sup>21</sup>

"Remember thy Lord much, and praise Him in the evening and in the morning."<sup>22</sup>

"Remember the name of thy Lord at morning and evening."<sup>23</sup>

### Second Foundation: Proofs from the Sunnah

#### Section [1]: On What Has Been Transmitted and Agreed Upon

#### Concerning the Merit of the Invocation

It was reported that Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may God be pleased with him!) said, "Mu'āwiyeh came upon a circle of people in the mosque, so he said, 'Why have you assembled?'"

"They said, 'We have gathered to remember God Most High.'

"He said, 'By God, you have not gathered except for that?'"

"They said, 'By God, nothing else has brought us together.'

"He said, 'Verily, I have not made you swear out of suspicion of you. Amongst those who were with the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) I had the lowest rank, nor was there anyone who told fewer ḥadīths than I. Nevertheless, the Messenger of God (may God

bless him and grant him peace!) came upon a circle of his companions and said:

"Why have you assembled?"

"They said, 'We are sitting invoking God Most High and we praise Him for having guided us to Islam and for having blessed us.'

"The Prophet said, 'By God, you have not gathered except for that?'

"They said, 'By God, only that has brought us together.'

"He said, 'Verily, I have not made you aware out of suspicion of you, but rather because Gabriel came to me and informed me that God Most High boasts of you to the angels.'"

Muslim and at-Tirmidhi transmitted this ḥadīth, whereas an-Nasā'ī transmitted the chain of authority only.<sup>24</sup> Razīn added by saying, "Then the Prophet related to us the following:

Never do a people gather together in any house of God Most High, reciting God's Book, studying it amongst themselves, and invoking God, without peace descending upon them, mercy enveloping them, the angels surrounding them, and God remembering them amongst those with Him.<sup>25</sup>

It is related through Muslim and at-Tirmidhi that Abū Muslim al-Agharr said, "I testify that Abū Hurayrah and Abū Sa'īd witnessed that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, 'A people do not sit invoking God without the angels surrounding them, mercy enveloping them, peace descending upon them, and God remembering them amongst those with Him.'<sup>26</sup>

Peace (as-sakīnah) comes from tranquillity and repose. The Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ reported the following words of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!): "This peace descends due to the reading of the Qur'ān."<sup>27</sup> It is a mercifulness; it is also said to be repose or

dignity or that by which man becomes calm (using Form I of the verb sakana); and this is well known. (It is said that some linguists construe this as Form II of the verb, sakkana, which intensifies it so that it means "that which makes man be or become calm"; this on the authority of al-Farrā' and al-Kisā'ī.) It is very likely that that which descended due to the reading of the Qur'ān is the peace which God Most High mentioned in His Book: "Peace of reassurance from your Lord."<sup>28</sup>

It is said that peace is a mystery like the wind, or was created with a face like that of a human being, or that it is a spirit from God which speaks to men and guides them when they differ on a matter, and so on. From what we have already mentioned, peace is probably something similar to that which descends on whoever recites the Qur'ān or gathers to invoke, because it belongs to the Spirit and the angels. God knows best!

Abū Hurayrah (may God be pleased with him!) related that "The Messenger (may God bless him and grant him peace!) was walking along the road to Mecca over a mountain called Jumdān and he said, 'Walk on, this is Jumdān. The pious recluses have gone before!' Those with him said, 'Who are the pious recluses, O Messenger of God?' He said, 'Those who remember God often.'" This account is from Muslim.<sup>29</sup> However, at-Tirmidhi's version states, "They said, 'O Messenger of God, who are the pious recluses?' He said, 'Those who are greatly devoted (al-mustah-tarūn) to the remembrance of God, which rids them of their burdens so that they arrive on the Day of Judgment unburdened'.<sup>30</sup>

In Arabic the pious recluses are called al-mufridūn; it is also said to be written as al-mufridūn. One says, "The man was alone (farada) in his opinion." Form I (farada), Form II (farrada), Form IV (efrada), and Form X (istafrada) of the verb all have the same meaning,

that is, to be independent and alone in one's planning." What is meant by this is that the mufarridūn are those who invoke God alone; the word is also defined as "the ones whose contemporaries have died and the times in which they lived have passed, leaving them behind so they remember God Most High." He who is utterly devoted to something (al-mustahtar) is enamored of it and assiduously applies himself to it out of love and desire for it.

The Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ states in his book al-Mashārīq that Ibn al-A'rabī said that Form II of the verb (farrada) is used when what is meant is that a person devotes himself to the acquisition of religious knowledge and secludes himself from people and is by himself for the sake of observing religious commandments and prescriptions.

Al-Azherī has said of the mufarridūn, "They are the ones who withdraw to invoke God and do not associate anything else with Him." It is said that the meaning of uhtirū is "They were afflicted with confusion." The meaning of mufarridūn is said to be "Those who affirm the Oneness of God and remember naught but God Most High and worship Him faithfully and sincerely." It has the same meaning as in the sentence: "So-and-so was totally absorbed in obedience to God," that is, he did not cease to persevere in prayer and remembrance until he passed away due to decrepitude and loss of strength and vigor. Some grammarians have said that uhtirū means "to be very devoted to something."

Al-Bukhārī transmitted the following tradition from Abū Hurayrah (may God be pleased with him!): "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, 'Indeed, God has angels who circle over the public ways, seeking those who invoke. When they find people invoking God, they call out, "Tell us your needs." Then they surround them with

their wings from the earth to the lowest heaven. Their Lord, Who is more knowing than they, asks the angels, "What do my servants say?"

"They say they praise Thee and exalt Thee and extol Thee."

"Then God says, "Have they seen Me?"

"No, by God, they have not seen Thee."

"He asks, "How would they have been if they had seen Me?"

"The angels reply, "If they had seen Thee, they would have been far more adoring servants of Thee and more praising of Thee."

"God says, "What do they ask?"

"The angels respond, "They ask Thee for Paradise."

"Have they seen it?"

"No, by God, they have not seen it, my Lord."

"Then how would they have been if they had seen it?"

"The angels say, "If they had seen Paradise, they would have been more eager for it, more beseeching of it, and much more desirous."

"God asks, "From what do they seek protection?"

"They seek protection from hellfire."

"Have they seen it?"

"The angels say, "If they had seen it, they would have fled from it more intensely and feared it much more."

"God says, "I call upon you as witnesses that I have pardoned them."

"One of the angels says, "There is So-and-So among the invokers who is not one of them but has only come out of a need."

"They are all participants; their companion will not suffer."<sup>31</sup>

At-Tirmidhī transmitted from Anas (may God be pleased with him!) that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "When you pass by the gardens of Paradise, graze therein." Those with

the Prophet asked, "What are the gardens of Paradise?" He answered, "Circles of people invoking."<sup>32</sup>

The Imām Ahmad transmitted the following hadīth of the Prophet from Ibn Mas'ūd: "Verily the devil moved amongst a people gathered to remember God but could not divide them. Then he came upon a circle of people conversing about this temporal world, so he lured them until they fell to fighting with each other. Those invoking God arose and restrained the latter and they dispersed."

#### Section [2]: On the Merit of the Invoker with Respect to Others

At-Tirmidhī reported that Abū Hurayrah (may God be pleased with him!) witnessed that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "No servant ever said 'There is no divinity but God' sincerely from the heart but that the gates of Heaven were opened to him so that he could reach the Throne of God, as long as he avoided mortal sins."<sup>33</sup>

Mālik said, "It has reached me that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) used to say, 'One who remembers God among the forgetful is like one who fights while others flee, or one who remembers God among the forgetful is like a green twig on a dry tree.'"<sup>34</sup> Another account reads that he is

like a green tree in the midst of a dry forest; and one who remembers God among the forgetful is like a lamp in a dark house; God shows the one who remembers Him among the forgetful his place in Paradise while he is alive. The one who remembers God in the midst of the forgetful is forgiven sins equal to the number of articulate and inarticulate beings.<sup>35</sup>

The "articulate beings" are mankind; the "inarticulate beings" are animals. (The Imām Mālik transmitted it thus.)

In his book al-Muwatta', Mālik transmitted the following: Mu'adh ibn Jabal related that "The servant cannot perform a better deed which will save him from God's punishment than the remembrance of God."<sup>36</sup>

Through at-Tirmidhī, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may God be pleased with him!) related that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) was asked, "Which servants are the most virtuous and the most highly esteemed by God on the Day of Judgment?" He said, "Those who remember God often." Someone asked, "O Messenger of God, and who among the warriors for the cause of God and Islam?" He answered, "If one struck with his sword until it was broken and became red with blood, verily, even so, the one who invokes God is higher than he in rank."<sup>37</sup>

Razīn reported the following account: "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) was asked, 'What type of worship is best and most highly esteemed by God on the Day of Judgment?' He said, 'Invoking God Most High'."

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (may God be pleased with him!) related that the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "The difference between a house wherein God is remembered and a house wherein He is not is like the difference between the living and the dead." This is thus reported in Muslim's Ṣaḥīḥ.<sup>38</sup> According to al-Bukhārī, the account reads: "The difference between someone who remembers His Lord and someone who does not is like the difference between the living and the dead."<sup>39</sup>

Abū Hurayrah (may God be pleased with him!) reported that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "God Most High says, 'I am of the same thinking as my servant is toward Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me. For if he remembers Me in

himself, I remember him in Myself; if he remembers Me in a gathering, I remember him in an assembly better than his; if he approaches Me a span, I approach him a cubit; if he approaches Me a cubit, I approach him a fathom; and if he comes to Me weeping, I come to him running'." (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and at-Tirmidhī transmitted it.)<sup>40</sup>

Abū Umāmah said, "I heard the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) say, 'For him who goes to bed in a state of purity and invokes God until sleep overcomes him, not a night will pass when he asks of God of the good things of this world and the next but that God will give them to him.'" (At-Tirmidhī transmitted it.)<sup>41</sup>

ʿUmar (may God be pleased with him!) related "that the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) sent an expedition toward Nejd. They took a great amount of spoils and hastened to return. A man among those who did not go said, 'We have never seen an expedition as quick to return or with better spoils than this one.' Then the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, 'Shall I not show you a people who have greater spoils and are faster in returning? They are a people who witness the dawn prayer then sit to invoke God Most High until the sun rises. Those are the quickest to return to God and have the best spoils.'" (At-Tirmidhī transmitted it.)<sup>42</sup>

### Section [3]

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Bishr (or Busr) reported that a man said, "O Messenger of God, indeed the ways of doing good are many but I cannot perform them all, so tell me something which I can follow, but do not make it too long for me, lest I forget."

Another version of the above reads. "Verily the religious laws of Islam are numerous and I have become old, so tell me something which I can follow, but do not make it too long for me, lest I forget." The Prophet said, "Your tongue should not cease to be moist with the remembrance of God." (At-Tirmidhī transmitted it.)<sup>43</sup>

ʿĀʾishah (may God be pleased with her!) said, "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) used to remember God at all times." (Muslim, Abū Dāʾūd, and at-Tirmidhī transmitted it.)<sup>44</sup>

CHAPTER [I]  
INVOKING ALOUD

At-Tirmidhī relates that 'Umar (may God be pleased with him!) reported that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said,

Whoever enters the marketplace and utters, 'There is no divinity but God, the One; He has no partner; to Him belong the Kingdom and praise; He gives life and takes life; He is alive and never dies; in His hand is all that is good; and He has power over everything,' God records one million good deeds for him and erases one million bad ones for him, and elevates him one million degrees.

In another account, the last line reads instead, "... and builds a house for him in Paradise."<sup>2</sup>

Yet another version states that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "He who enters the market place and calls out at the top of his voice"—and the rest of the above hadīth is cited up to "everything," followed by: "God records for him a hundred thousand good deeds."<sup>3</sup>

In al-Bukhārī's account, Abū Sa'īd, the client of Ibn 'Abbās, reports that Ibn 'Abbās informed him that raising the voice in invocation when people had departed from the prescribed prayer was a practice in the time of the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!). Ibn 'Abbās said, "I would know when they left by that."

The Prophet (on him be blessings and peace!) has said from God, "He who remembers Me in an assembly, I remember him in an assembly greater than his."<sup>4</sup>

It is related that Abū Bakr (may God be pleased with him!) used to lower his voice in prayer at night and not raise his voice in reading the Qur'ān, whereas 'Umar used to raise his voice in prayer. So the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) asked Abū Bakr about his way and the latter answered, "He to whom I speak with intimately hears my voice." Then he questioned 'Umar, who responded, "I stir the somnolent and drive out the devil and please the Merciful." Then the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) instructed Abū Bakr to raise his voice a little and 'Umar to lower his a little. Do you not see that he (may God bless him and grant him peace!) instructed Abū Bakr to raise his voice aloud and did not instruct Umar to whisper, but rather to lower his voice, which is not whispering? If this is so with respect to Qur'ānic recitation—which is the best of all forms of remembrance—then other invocations should be done likewise, and it is even more appropriate that they should be done that way.

It is incumbent upon the invoker, when he is alone, if he is of the advanced, to lower his voice in invocation, but if he is of the generality of believers, to invoke aloud. If the invokers are gathered in an assembly, then it is more fitting that they raise their voices in unison while invoking in a rhythmically balanced manner. Some have said,

The likeness between the invocation of one person alone and that of a group is as the likeness between one muezzin and a group of muezzins. Just as the voices of a group of muezzins cut through a mass of air more than one voice does, so too does the invocation of a group of people of one heart make a deeper impression and have a stronger impact in lifting the veils from the heart than does the invocation of one invoker by himself. Moreover, in such a case, everyone obtains the reward of both invoking by himself and hearing others invoke.



God compares hardened hearts to stone in His words (exalted be He!): "Then, after that, your hearts were hardened and became as stone, or worse than stone, for hardness."<sup>5</sup> Stone does not break except by force. Likewise the hardness of the heart does not vanish except by a powerful invocation.

### Section [1]

#### On Warning Against Abandoning the Invocation

God Most High has said, "And he whose sight is dim to the remembrance of the Beneficent, We assign unto him a devil who becometh his comrade; and lo! they surely turn them from the way of God, and yet they deem that they are rightly guided."<sup>6</sup>

According to Abū Dā'ūd, Abū Hureyreh (may God be pleased with him!) reported that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "Whosoever sits down in a place and does not remember God therein is subject to God's retribution, and whosoever lies down on a bed and does not remember God therein is subject to God's retribution."<sup>7</sup>

In at-Tirmidhī's version, the Messenger said, "Never have a people sat together without remembering God therein or praying upon their Prophet but that they were subject to God's retribution. If He wished, He could either chastise them or pardon them."<sup>8</sup> Concerning this, Abū Hurayrah reported that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "There is not a people who depart from a gathering without having remembered God therein but that they depart with a smell more offensive than that of a donkey's cadaver, and affliction befalls them." (Abū Dā'ūd transmitted it.)<sup>9</sup>

The etymology of the word tirah ("retribution") has to do with "shortcoming"; but here it means "consequence." One says: "I inflicted harm on the man" (watartu 'r-rejula tirah), which is of the same grammatical pattern as "I made him a promise" (wa'adtuhu 'idah).

Mu'adh ibn Jabal reported that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "The inhabitants of Paradise are not distressed except when an hour passes in which they do not remember God." (Ibn as-Sunnī transmitted it.)<sup>10</sup> It is related that "Every soul will leave this world thirsty except the invoker of God Most High."

Sahl said, "I do not know of a viler disobedience than abandoning the remembrance of this Lord." An-Nawawī said, "Everything has a punishment, and the punishment of the gnostic is his severance from the invocation."

### Section [2]

#### On the Invocation According to Traditions of the Pious Ancestors

Anas ibn Mālik (may God be pleased with him!) said, "The invocation of God is a sign of faith, a liberation from hypocrisy, a protection from the devil, and a refuge from hellfire."

Mālik ibn Dinār said, "Whoever does not prefer the intimacy of discourse with God to that of mankind diminishes in knowledge, becomes blind of heart, and wastes his life away." In this regard al-Hasan has said,

Seek for sweetnes in three things: in ritual prayer, in the invocation, and in reciting the Qur'ān. If you have found it, well and good. If not, then know that the door is closed, because every heart which does not know God has no intimacy with the invocation of God and relies not on Him.

God Most High has said, "And when God alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter are repelled and when those whom they worship beside Him are mentioned, behold! they are glad."<sup>11</sup>

One of the gnostics said:

Sustenance of the outer man comes from the movements of the body; sustenance of the inner man comes from the movements of the heart; sustenance of one's most interior being is through tranquillity; and sustenance of the intellect is through extinction of one's consciousness of tranquillity, so that the servant is tranquil for the sake of God, through God, and with God.

And this has been said: "Whoever, for the sake of God, carries out the inner reality of the invocation, of the praise of God, and of gratitude, He subjects unto him the universe and all creatures therein."

Mutarrif ibn Abī Bakr said, "The lover never tires of conversing with his Beloved." And this has been said: "Whoever does not experience the loneliness of heedlessness will not savor the taste of the intimacy of remembrance." 'Atā' said, "Lightning will not strike the invoker of God Most High."

Al-Hāmid al-Aswad said,

I was with Ibrāhīm al-Khawāṣṣ on a journey, and we came to a place where there were many snakes. He unsaddled his mount and sat down, so I did likewise. When the night began to cool and the air to chill, the snakes came out. I cried out to the Shaykh, but he said, "Remember God!" So I did, and the snakes left. Then they returned, and I called out to him but he said the same thing. I did not cease being in that state till morning. When we arose in the morning, the Shaykh got up and walked, and I walked with him. Suddenly a huge snake, which had been coiled around him, fell from the inner folds of his garment.

I said to him, "Did you not feel it?" He answered, "No, it has been a long time since I have seen a night more pleasant than last night."

This has been said:

The remembrance of God in the heart is the sword of the novices with which they combat their enemies and repel the afflictions that befall them. Indeed, when tribulation leads the servant astray, if he occupies his heart with God, all that he dislikes leaves him immediately.

And this has been said:

When the invocation takes possession of the heart, if the devil draws near, he is made prostrate the way a man would be felled. As a result, the devils gather about the heart and ask, 'What happened to it?' Some of them respond, 'Intimacy with God has smitten it!'

This has been said: "Verily, the angel of death consults with the invoker when the time comes to take his soul." In the Gospel there is this: "Remember Me when you are angry and I will remember you when I am angry. Be content with My help to you, for My help to you is better than your own help is to yourself." Dhu'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī said, "Whoever truly remembers God forgets everything alongside of the invocation, while God takes care of everything for him, and is for him a compensation for everything."

### Third Foundation: Sincerity

Know that everything is to be thought of as being mixed with something else. When its mixture is purified, it is called "pure" (*khālīṣ*); a purified deed is called "sincerity" (*ikhhlās*). Everyone who performs a voluntary act purely necessarily has a certain personal interest in that deed; so, when there is but one fault in the deed, that deed is called

"sincerity," except that custom dictates specifically that sincerity of devotion is the stripping of all faults from one's intention to draw near to God, just as heresy is "deviation," but custom specifies that it is "deviation from the Truth." When you have learned that, then we maintain that the motive for a deed is either spiritual only--and this is sincerity--or it is diabolical only--and this is hypocrisy; or it is composed of both. If it is the last-named, either the first two are equal, or the spiritual is stronger, or the psychical is stronger.

#### First Category: When the Motive Is Spiritual Only

This is not to be conceived of except as coming from the lover of God Most High, who is drowned in preoccupation with Him to such an extent that no place remains in his heart for the love of this world. At that moment all his actions and movements reveal this quality. He does not fulfill a need nor does he sleep, or like to eat or drink, for example, unless this be done in order to carry out a necessity or to strengthen obedience. The likes of such a one, were he to eat or drink or fulfill a need, would be pure of deed in all his movements and repose.

#### Second Category: When the Motive Is Psychical Only

This is not to be conceived of except as coming from the lover of "self" and of this world, who is drowned in preoccupation with them to such an extent that no place remains in his soul for the love of God. Then all his actions take on this characteristic and none of his religious observances is free of it.

As for the remaining third category in which the two motives are equal, the Imām Fakhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī said, "It appears that both are in opposition to one another and will gradually become imbalanced." Then a

deed will be neither for nor against a person. Whenever one of the two tendencies dominates in a person, then that which could have equalized the other tendency in him is lost. The excess cannot but then be the cause for its corresponding effect. That is what is meant by His words (exalted be He!): "Whosoever doeth an atom's weight of good will see it and whoso doeth ill an atom's weight will see it."<sup>12</sup>

To be perfectly exact in this matter, actions produce effects on the heart. If the influence is free of opposition, the effect is free of weakness. If the influence is combined with its opposite, then, if they are equal to one another, they gradually cancel each other out. When one of the two motives gains ascendancy, then it is inevitable that excess should occur in proportion to the diminishment of the other. Hence, an equilibrium between both motives can take place or an imbalance; in the latter case, the excess amount would remain devoid of its opposite, so that it would most certainly have some effect.

Just as the effect of an atom's weight of food or drink or medicine is not lost on the body, so too the effect of an atom's weight of goodness or evil is not lost either in drawing near to God's door or in estrangement from Him. When a person combines something that will draw him closer to God by a span with something that takes him back by a span, then he returns to a previous condition which was neither for nor against him. If one of two deeds brings him closer by two spans while the other sets him back by one span, he has most assuredly gained a span.

He who claims that there is no reward for the action of mixed motives advances two arguments. The first one is based on what Abū Hurayrah related that the Prophet (on him be blessings and peace!) said

to him about the person who had associated partners with God in his deed: "Take your recompense from the one for whom you have worked." The second is also based on his authority (God bless him and grant him peace!) when he said, "Verily, God Most High says, 'I am of all partners the least in need of association; whoever performs a deed in which he makes a partner of someone other than Me, I leave My share therein to My partner.'"13

I reply that the word "partner" (sharik) is to be related to an equality between two motivating causes. We have already shown that when there are two equal things, each cancels out the other.

Know that a diabolic suggestion might be present in the forms of devotional acts, in the various types of good deeds, and in the love of charismatic phenomena. The devil does not cease being with men until man is purified. When he becomes sincere, the devil leaves him; man then no longer covets and exerts himself in thankfulness. The good does not come to man in just any way but only through the door of sincerity. So be sincere! If you were to be in a state of sincerity, you would not think of yourself as being in a state of sincerity!

### Section [3]

#### On the Rules of Conduct for the Invocation

The invocation has rules of conduct preceding it, subsequent to it, and associated with it. Some of them are outward and some are inward. As for the rules of conduct which precede, we say that after repentance and self-discipline, the seeker must engage in spiritual exercises, refine his inner nature, and prepare himself for the decrees of the Divine Presence by withdrawing from creatures, lessening outside

contacts, removing obstacles, acquiring knowledge of this world and the next--which is enjoined upon all men--and by consecrating himself to God. These rules are the inner life of the seeker's spiritual stations, for they are based on religious law, not on custom. The seeker must choose an invocation which is appropriate to his state; then he must devote himself to it and persevere.

Among the rules of conduct are the wearing of proper, clean, sweet-smelling clothes and maintaining purity of the stomach by eating lawful food. Although the invocation expels the parts arising from unlawful food, nevertheless, when the stomach is empty of unlawful food or whatever is doubtful, the benefit of the invocation is in a greater or more lasting illumination of the heart. When there is unlawful food in the stomach, the invocation washes it out and purifies the stomach. Consequently, at such times its benefit in illuminating the heart is weaker. Do you not see that if you wash soiled things in water, it removes the dirt, but they are not very clean? For that reason, it is preferable to wash them a second or a third time. However, if an area to be washed is already free of dirt, it increases in beauty and radiance from the first laundering. When the invocation descends into the heart, if there is darkness within, it illuminates it; and if there is already light, the invocation increases the light and intensifies it.

The rules of conduct associated with the invocation<sup>14</sup> are sincerity, perfuming the place of invoking with a sweet fragrance for the sake of the angels and jinn, sitting cross-legged facing the direction of prayer, if one is alone, and if one is in a group, then one sits wheresoever one winds up in the gathering. One should put the palms of one's hands on the thighs, close one's eyes and face straight ahead. Some say that, if one is under the direction of a shaykh, one should

imagine him in front of oneself, because the shaykh is one's companion and guide along the path. At the beginning of the invocation, the novice should ask with his heart for the help of his shaykh's inspiration (himmah), believing that asking help of him is the same as asking help of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!), for the sheykh is his representative.

The novice should invoke with perfect force and respectful veneration. "There is no divinity but God" (Lā ilāha illa 'llāh) should rise from above his navel. By the phrase "There is no divinity" (lā ilāha), he should intend excluding from the heart what is other-than-God. By the phrase "but God" (illa 'llāh), he should intend uniting the formula with the cone-shaped physical heart so as to fix illa 'llāh firmly in the heart and let it flow throughout all the members of the body, causing the meaning of the invocation to be present in his heart at every instant.

One of the seges said that it is not proper to invoke repetitively time after time except with a meaning which differs from the first one. He said, "The lowest level of the invocation is the one wherein every time one says, 'There is no divinity but God', one expels from the heart whatever is other-than-God. But if one pays attention to it, then one has as much as ascribed to it the position of deity." The Most High has said: "Hast thou seen him who chooseth for his god his own passion?"<sup>15</sup> "Set not up with God any other god."<sup>16</sup> "Did I not charge you, O ye sons of Adam, that ye worship not the devil?"<sup>17</sup>

In a ḥadīth of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!), he says, "Perish the servant of the dinār, perish the servant of the dirham!" Even if the dinār and the dirham are not worshipped

through actual bowing and prostration, nevertheless they are worshipped by turning one's heart to them. So, the invoker's "There is no divinity but God" is not valid except by negating whatever is in one's soul and heart that is other-than-God Most High. Whoever fills his heart with the forms of sensorial things, then, even if he were to utter the phrase a thousand times, rarely would he realize its meaning in his heart. But if he emptied his heart of all that is other-than-God and said Allāh one time, he would find such bliss that the tongue could not describe. Shaykh 'Abd ar-Raḥīm al-Qinā'ī (or Qunnā'ī) said, "I said Lā ilāha illa 'llāh one time, then it did not happen to me again."

A black slave was with the tribe of Isrā'īl when it was wandering in the desert. Whenever he said Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, he became white from head to feet. The realization of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh by the slave is one of the states of the heart that can be neither expressed by the tongue nor thought out by the mind. While Lā ilāha illa 'llāh is the very essence of the ways of approaching God, it is also the key to the inner realities of the heart and to the seeker's ascension to the invisible worlds.

There are those who choose to invoke constantly in such a manner that the two phrases are like one without any outside or mental interruption occurring between them, so that the devil cannot intrude himself therein. For, in the likes of such a situation, the devil lies in wait because he knows the weakness of the traveler in treading through these valleys that he is not used to, especially if he is a beginner in the path. Some authorities have said, "This uninterrupted invocation is the quickest way to the illumination of the heart and to approaching God."

One of the authorities has said,

The lengthening of the vowel ā in Lā ilāha ("There is no divinity") is considered good and recommended because, during the time of the elongation, the invoker can visualize in his mind all opposites and contraries and expel them. That is followed by the illa 'llāh ("but God"), and that is closer to sincerity because it is the acknowledgement of the Divinity. Although he negates His essence with Lā ilāha, he nevertheless affirms His Being with illa 'llāh. Indeed, illa ("except") is a light placed in the heart, illuminating it.

Another authority has said, "Omitting the vowel elongation is more appropriate because perhaps one might die in the interval of pronouncing Lā ilāha before reaching illa 'llāh." Still another authority has said, "If the change from disbelief to belief is intended, then omitting the elongation is more suitable in hastening the transition to belief. But if one is already a believer, then the vowel elongation is better" due to what has been previously said.

With regard to the rules of conduct subsequent to the invocation: when one becomes silent by choice, he is "present" with his heart as one who is receptive to the inspiration of the invocation. Those rules have to do with the "absence" (al-ghaybah) that takes place following the invocation, which is also called "a sleep." Just as God Most High made it customary to send winds as an announcement preceding the mercifulness of His cascading rain, so too did He make it customary to send the winds of the invocation as an announcement preceding His lofty mercifulness. Perhaps the invoker's heart will be filled in an instant by an inspiration that all the efforts and ascetic exercises of thirty years could not achieve. These rules of conduct are binding upon the invoker who is consciously free to choose.

As for the one who has no free choice, he is subject to whatever comes over him in the way of invocations and whatever he himself comes across among the sum total of divine mysteries. Hence, there might flow from his tongue Allāh, Allāh, Allāh or Hū, Hū, Hū or lā lē lā lē lā, or ā ā ā ā ā, or āh āh āh āh, or a sound without any letter or noise. His behavior, therefore, is to submit to the inspiration. After the passing of the inspiration, he should be very quiet. These are the rules of conduct for the one who needs to invoke with the tongue. As for the one who invokes with the heart, he is in no need of these rules.

## CHAPTER [II]

### BENEFITS OF THE INVOCATION IN GENERAL

Let whosoever desires the benefits of invoking follow the established texts, inasmuch as its benefits are not insignificant nor can they be exhausted. The invocation of the traditional authorities has numerous advantages, so let us mention what comes to mind. We say: invoking repels, subdues, and tames Satan, but pleases the Compassionate (ar-Rehman). It angers Setan, removes worry and grief from the heart, attracts joy and happiness, and eliminates sadness and evils.

Invoking strengthens the heart and the body, puts inner and outer affairs in order, gladdens the heart and face, making the latter radiant. Moreover, it procures sustenance and facilitates obtaining it. It clothes the invoker in dignity; it inspires correct behavior in every affair. Its permanence is one of the means of obtaining the love of God; it is one of the greatest of the gateways leading to that love.

Invoking causes the vigilance that leads to the station of spiritual virtue (ihṣān), wherein the servant adores God as if he saw Him with his very own eyes. It causes one to turn to God often; for whoever turns to God by remembering Him frequently will eventually turn to Him in all his affairs. Invoking brings closeness to the Lord and opens the door of gnosis within the heart. It bestows on the servant the veneration and reverential fear (haybah) of his Lord, while for the forgetful man the veil of reverential fear over his heart is very thin.

Invoking causes God's remembrance of the servant, which is the greatest honor and loftiest distinction. Through the invocation the

heart of man lives just as the seed lives through the downpour of rain. The invocation is the nourishment of the soul just as food is the nourishment of the body. Invoking polishes the heart of its rust, which is forgetfulness (gheflah) and the pursuit of its passions. It is to meditation like a lamp that guides one in the dark towards an open road. It thwarts sinful actions: "Verily, good deeds annul bad deeds."<sup>1</sup> Invoking puts an end to the estrangement that occurs between the Lord and the forgetful servant.

Whatever the formula used by the servant to remember God with, such as: "Glory be to God!" (subhāna 'llāh) or "God is Most Great" (Allāhu Akbar) or "There is no divinity but God" (Lā 'ilāhe ille 'llāh)<sup>2</sup> or any formula of praise, it calls the attention of God on the Glorious Throne to the servant. All acts of worship withdraw from the servant on the Day of Resurrection except the remembrance of God, the belief in His Oneness (tawḥīd), and praise of Him. Whoever gets to know God in times of prosperity through his invoking, gets to know Him in times of adversity through his piety.

A tradition states,

Indeed, when misfortune befalls the obedient servant who frequently remembers God Most High, or when he asks of God a need, the angels say, 'My Lord, there is a familiar voice from a familiar servant.' When the forgetful person who shuns God calls upon Him or asks something of Him, the angels say, 'My Lord, there is an unknown voice from an unknown servant.'

Of all deeds there is none more redemptive from the chastisement of God, who possesses Majesty, than the invocation. For the servant it is the cause for the descent of Peace (ṣakīnah) upon him, for the encircling of angels around him, for their alighting by him, and for his

being enveloped by Mercifulness. How sublime is such a grace! The invocation is for a tongue undistracted by slander, lying, and every falsehood!

The companion who sits with the invoker is not troubled by him; the invoker's close friend is happy with him. On the Day of Judgment, the invoker's encounters with others will not be a source of sorrow for him or of harm or remorse.

Invoking with tears and lamentation is a cause for obtaining the shelter of the umbral Throne on the great Day of Requit, when mankind stands for a period awaiting judgment. Whoever is diverted by the remembrance of God from making a request will be given the best of what is given to the one who does ask; and things will be made easy for the servant most of the time and in most situations.

The movement of invoking with the tongue is the easiest movement for a person. The plants of the gardens of Paradise are the invocation. Paradise is a good earth and sweet water; it is composed, indeed, of plains, and the plants therein are "Glory be to God" (subhāna 'llāh), "Praise be to God" (al-hamdu lillāh), "There is no divinity but God" (Lā ilāha illa 'llāh) and "God is Most Great," (Allāhu Akbar), as are found in the sound hadiths. These formulas are a means of liberating oneself from the fires of Hell and are a protection from forgetfulness in this world, the world of ignominy. The textual proof of this, as found in the Qur'ān, is: "Therefore remember Me, I will remember you."<sup>3</sup> Forgetfulness of God is what makes servants forget their souls and that is the extreme of corruption.

Invoking is a light for the servant in this world, his grave, his resurrection, and his assembling with others on the Day of Judgment. It is the fundamental principle and the door to spiritual union; it is the

sign of authority whereby it assails the ego and passional desires. When the invocation is firmly rooted in the heart and drops down in it and the tongue becomes subordinate to it, the invoker is in need of nothing; so he progresses and ascends. As for the forgetful man, even if he be wealthy, he is in reality poor; and if he be powerful, he is actually base.

For the one who remembers God, invoking unites his dispersed heart and pervades his will and his broken resolve. It scatters his sadness, his sin, and the forces of Satan and his followers. Invoking brings the heart closer to the Hereafter and keeps the world away from the heart, even though the world is around it. Invoking warns the heedless heart to abandon its pleasures and deceptions. It redresses what has passed and prepares itself for what is to come.

The invocation is a tree whose fruit is gnosis; it is the treasure of every gnostic: God is with the invoker through His nearness, authority, love, bestowal of success and protection. The invocation puts in proper perspective the emancipation of slaves, the holy war and its hardships, fighting in the way of God, injury, and the expenditure of money and gold. The invocation is the summit, source, and basis of gratitude to God. He whose tongue does not cease being moist with the remembrance of God and who fears God in His prohibitions and commands is granted entrance into the Paradise of the beloved ones and nearness to the Lord of Lords. "Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of God, is the best in conduct."<sup>4</sup>

The invoker enters Paradise laughing and smiling and is at home therein, living in ease. Invoking removes hardness from the heart and engenders tenderness and mildness. Forgetfulness of the heart is a



disease and an ailment, while remembrance is a cure for the invoker from every maledy and symptom, as was said by a poet:

When we became ill, by your remembrance we were cured,  
And when at times we abandon it, a relapse do we suffer.

Remembrance is the source and foundation of God's friendship; forgetfulness is the origin and summit of His enmity. When forgetfulness takes possession of the servant, it drives him back to God's enmity in the ugliest way. Invoking removes misfortunes, pushing them to one side, and draws unto itself blessings and every beneficial thing. It is a cause for the blessings of God and the noble angels upon him, so that he emerges out of the darkness into the light and enters the abode of peace. The gatherings to invoke are gardens of Paradise, and indulging therein pleases the Compassionate. God Most High boasts of those who remember Him to the angels of heaven, for its place among the acts of worship is the highest and most sublime.

The most excellent of those who perform good deeds are those who most often remember God in all situations. Remembrance takes the place of all deeds, it being alike whether they are connected with wealth or with something else. Invoking strengthens the limbs and facilitates pious work. It eases difficult matters, opens locked doors, mitigates hardships, and lessens toil. It is a security for the fearful and deliverance from desert wastelands. Among the participants in the race track for the winning trophy, the invoker is triumphant. Soon you will see, when the dust settles: was it a horse you rode—or a donkey?

Invoking is a cause for God's approval of His servant, because the invocation has made him aware of His Majesty and Beauty and praise. Through the invocation the dwellings of Paradise are built; but for the

forgetful, no dwelling in Paradise is built. Invocations are a barrier between the servant and hellfire. If the remembrance is continuous and permanent, then the barrier is good and solid; if not, it is fragile and torn.

Remembrance is a fire that neither stays nor spreads. When it enters a house, it leaves no substance or trace therein. It eliminates the portions of food remaining which exceed one's bodily need or are forbidden to consume. Invoking removes darkness and brings forth radiant lights. Angels ask forgiveness for the servant when he perseveres in the remembrance and praise of God. Lands and mountains are proud of the one who, amongst men, remembers God while on them.

Remembrance is the sign of the thankful believer, whereas the hypocrite is rarely found to be invoking. He whose wealth or children distract him from remembering God is lost; but the one who remembers God experiences delights sweeter than the pleasure of food and drink. In this world the invoker's face and heart are covered with beauty and happiness; in the Hereafter his face is whiter and more luminous than the moon. The earth witnesses on his behalf just as it does for every person who obeys or disobeys God. Invoking elevates the participant to the most exalted of ranks and conveys him to the highest of stations.

The invoker is alive even if he be dead; while the forgetful man, even though he is alive, is actually to be counted among the dead. The invoker has his thirst quenched at death and is safe from the apprehensions of the perils associated with death. Among the forgetful, the one who remembers God is like a lamp in a dark house, while the forgetful are themselves like a dark night with no morning to follow.

If something occupies the invoker and distracts him from the remembrance of God, then he risks chastisement. If he is unmindful of this point, then it is like someone sitting with a king without the proper conduct: that will expose him to being punished. Concentrating on the remembrance of God for a while is being careful not to mix sins with pious deeds. "Being careful," if only for a short while, has tremendous benefit.

CHAPTER [III]  
ON THE BENEFITS OF THE INVOCATIONS  
USED BY THE NOVICE TRAVELING THE PATH

Know that the most Beautiful Names (al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā) of God Most High are a medicine for the maladies of the heart and the sicknesses of those traveling to the presence of the Divine Knower of the Invisible World. A remedy is not to be used except for illnesses which that particular Name benefits. For example, where the name "the Giver" (al-Mu'tī) is beneficial for a particular illness of the heart, a Name which is not salutary for that situation is not prescribed, and so forth.

The rule is that whosoever uses an invocation and that invocation has an intelligible meaning, the influence of that meaning attaches itself to his heart, followed by the corollary significations of the meaning, until the invoker is characterized by those qualities. This is so unless the Name be one of the Names of vengeance, in which case fear clings to the heart of the invoker; and if inspiration comes to him, it is from the world of Majesty (al-Jalāl).

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Truthful" (aṣ-Ṣādiq): Its invocation bestows on the one who is veiled truthfulness (ṣidq) of tongue; on the Sufi adherent, truthfulness of heart; and on the gnostic, realization.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Guide" (al-Hādī): It is salutary during spiritual retreat (khalwah). It is beneficial against the state of dispersion and distraction and eliminates them. Whosoever seeks the help of God but does not see the visible signs of assistance forth-

coming, then let him know that his continually asking for God's help is what is sought from him.

His name (exalted be He!) "the Resurrector" (al-Bā'ith): Those who are forgetful invoke it; but those who are possessed of extinction (fanā') do not invoke it.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Perdoner" (al-'Afuw): It is appropriate for common people to invoke it, because it improves them; but its invocation is not the concern of travelers on the path to God, because the remembrance of sin is implicit therein. The invocation of the initiates (al-qawm) does not contain the remembrance of sin, nor for that matter, the remembrance of good deeds. However, when the common people invoke the Name, it ameliorates their spiritual state.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Protector" (el-Mawlā): He is the Victor and the Master. Only servants having a special affinity with this Name invoke it. If others who are spiritually above them invoke the Name, it has a different significance.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Virtuous" (al-Muhsin): It is appropriate for the generality of believers when attainment of the station of trust in God is desired for them. Invoking this Name necessitates intimacy with God and hastens spiritual insight. With it the novice is treated against the awesome fear of the world of Majesty (Jalāl).

His Name (exalted be He!) "the All-Knowing" (el-'Allām): Its invocation erases one from forgetfulness and makes the heart be present with the Lord. It teaches proper conduct accompanied with vigilance. Amongst the devotees of Beauty (al-Jemāl), the Name confers upon the heart intimacy (uns) with God; and amongst the devotees of the world of Majesty (Jalāl), the Name renews fear and awe in the heart.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Forgiving" (al-Ghāfir): It is assigned for the generality of disciples who fear punishment of sin. As for those who are worthy of the Divine Presence, remembrance of the forgiveness of sins causes alienation in them. Likewise the remembrance of good deeds causes thoughtlessness, generating in the soul a notion somewhat as if it had done God a favor in serving Him through acts of obedience or in remembering the harm of evil deeds.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Firm" (al-Matīn): It means hard. This name is harmful to those in seclusion (khalwāb); but it is beneficial to those who mock religion and returns them, throughout the duration of their remembrance of it, to submissiveness and obedience.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Rich" (al-Gbanī): Invoking it is beneficial to those who seek disengagement from worldly things but are unable to do so alone.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Reckoner" (al-Ḥasīb): If the invoker of it is infatuated with the activities of gaining a livelihood, he emerges from them toward disengagement because of contentment with the Reckoner, that is, the Sufficient (al-Kēfī).

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Nourisher" (el-Muqīt): Invoking it helps in disengaging oneself from the care of gaining a living and bestows trust in God.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Possessor of Majesty" (Dhu'l-Jalāl): It is good during retreat for those who are forgetful.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Creator" (al-Khāliq): It is among the Names invoked by the people who have the station of religious devotion ('ibādah) by virtue of conjoining beneficial knowledge with pious deeds. It is not suitable to be taught to those with a unique

receptivity, for it estranges them from gnosis and draws them toward mental reckoning.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Fashioner" (al-Muṣawwir): It is among the invocations of pious servants.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Knower" (al-ʿĀlim): It is among the invocations of pious servants. It is good for the beginners among those traveling the path, for there is a reminder of vigilance in it; and through it fear and hope are obtained.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Counter" (al-Muḥṣī): It is among the invocations of pious servants.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Watcher" (ar-Raḳīb): When those who are forgetful invoke it, they awaken from their slumber. When the wakeful invoke it, they remain in a wakeful state. If pious worshippers invoke it, they are freed of hypocrisy. Neither those who are in control of their actions nor the gnostics need to invoke it; nor does it have any relationship with those who are utterly extinguished in the Goal, because they have gone beyond the Names.

One of the shaykhs used to teach his disciples the following: "God is with me, God is watching me, and God sees me." He would instruct them to repeat that always with their tongues and hearts. His intention in all that was to treat the illness of the heart, stemming from the malady of forgetfulness. He would draw their attention to the invocation of ar-Raḳīb in conformity with its meaning. The upshot was that they reached the state of "presence" with God Most High through proper comportment; and this is the state of those who perform pious devotion with the heart. The most perfect of them are those who control their breaths, i.e., those who do not inhale a breath without their hearts

being present with God Most High, nor exhale a breath without their being in the presence of God Most High. It is a very difficult spiritual station for those veiled from God. It is burdensome on them, because in observing it, not a share remains to human habits but that it falls by the wayside.

#### Section [1]

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Trustworthy" (al-Wafī): It is the invocation of the intermediates on the path. Invoking it during retreat confers acceptance to the ultimate content of one's receptivity.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Thankful" (ash-Shākir): That is, the One Who is grateful to His pious servant for his deed, namely, He commends him for it. It bestows on the adepts of the invocation the station of love if they are Sufis, the station of extinction if they are gnostics, and the station of centrality (qutbiyyah) and eminence if they are of those who have reached the end. It is a holy presence surrounded by intimacy with God, and in retreat has far-reaching effects.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Glorious" (al-Majīd): It is not used in retreat by novices, whereas it is incumbent upon intermediates to invoke it when the Truth manifests itself to them by descending to the level of "the presence of limitations" (taqyīd). Verily, invoking al-Majīd removes all forms.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Loving" (al-Wadūd): He is Loving towards all Creation. When adepts invoke it, they achieve intimacy and love.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Benefactor" (al-Mannān): Its invocation in retreat is very beneficial to those who have quit the pleasures

of the ego, but it is harmful to those whose desires of the self remain.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Affectionate" (al-Nennān): Its invocation in retreat strengthens intimacy until it takes its practitioner to love.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Benign" (al-Barr): It bestows intimacy and hastens partial insight, but not union.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Outward" (az-Zāhir): Invoking it is beneficial during a very difficult journey.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Cleaver" (al-Fāliq): Its invocation during a retreat profoundly benefits the renouncer and hastens the coming of illumination upon him when accompanied by the name "the Self-Subsistent" (al-Qayyūm) or "the Living" (al-Hayy); but it slows down illumination if "There is no divinity but God" (Lā ilāha illa 'llāh) is invoked with it.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Gracious" (al-Laṭīf): It carries with it the all-encompassing meaning of mercifulness. Invoking it during retreat benefits those who are opaque in nature and makes them more refined. It benefits the contemplatives: it strengthens the contemplation of those who were previously weak.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Light" (an-Nūr): It is quick to bestow light and insight on those in retreat, because it does so by degrees. Rarely does it give total illumination.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Inheritor" (al-Wārith): It is appropriate for gnostics and attracts them toward absolute extinction in God: it is the station that ends the path.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Giver" (al-Mu'tī): Of all the Names invoked in retreat, it is the one most likely to bring about illumination, albeit a weak one.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Superior" (al-Fā'iq): The gnostics invoke it but not the novices.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Grateful" (ash-Shakūr): Its invocation is a characteristic of the elite who have achieved union.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Almighty" (Dhu't-Tawāl): Among God's graces to us are submission (islām), then faith (imān), then virtue (ihsān), then peace, then uprightness, then the freedom of conduct, then gnosis, then comprehension, then realization by degrees, and then the function of viceregent (khilāfah). This invocation hastens illumination. Likewise His Names "the Opener" (al-Fattāh) and "the First" (al-Awwal) hasten illumination.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Dominating" (al-Jabbār): It is conferred in retreat upon whosoever is overcome by a state and it is feared that the expansion (basṭ) which initiates finds radiating from the Name "the Expander" (al-Bāsiṭ) will overwhelm him. When someone whose substance is mixed with expansion invokes it, contraction (qabḍ) comes upon him, and thus he becomes equilibrated in treading the path.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Proud" (al-Mutakabbir): It is invoked in retreat and elsewhere to bring reverential fear back to the one who has been overcome by expansion.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Able" (al-Qādir): The fruit of its invocation is that it benefits those who consider miracles (kharq al-'awā'id) as farfetched. So when one of them invokes the Name in his retreat, his inner being is given the grace to see their validity to a certain extent.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Judge" (al-Qāḍī): That is, He whose judgment is obeyed. Whosoever has hesitated in matters out of ignorance

and invokes this Name. God decrees for him the contemplation of Truth in his inner being.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Strong" (al-Qawī): Its invocation benefits those who become sick during retreat or forget or become too weak to invoke or become dispersed. Truly, it unites: its virtue lies in its belonging by right to the path of kings and great men inasmuch as when they invoke it, the Name unites them in conformity with the Truth.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Guardian" (al-Hefīz): Its characteristic is the preservation of a state. Whoever fears deception invokes it.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Honored" (al-Mukarram): The shaykh should order the novice to use it when the latter has a low opinion of himself and his intimacy with God is non-existent because of his asking for forgiveness.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Planner" (al-Mudabbir): Invoking it is not good for the traveler on the path except when the shaykh fears that the process of unification (tawhīd) will overcome him.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Great" (al-Kabīr): The shaykh should instruct the disciple to invoke it when the manifestation of nearness to God overcomes him and when the shaykh fears that the disciple will be distraught by it.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Exalted" (al-Muta'ālī): Like the name "the Great" (al-Kabīr), it benefits whoever is overcome by nearness to God and is beside himself. When he invokes the Name, he returns to his senses.

## Section [2]

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Potent" (al-Muqtedir): Its meaning is "the Able" (al-Qādir). He whom the sheykh wishes to manifest charismatic phenomena (keremāt) without union invokes this Name.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Efficacious" (al-Fa'āl): Its invocation benefits whoever desires to produce effects and charismatic phenomena.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Reliable" (al-Wāthiq): The shaykh should give it as an invocation to whomsoever he fears will be unreceptive, which would veil illumination from him.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Restorer" (al-Mu'īd): The shaykh should assign it to whomsoever he wishes to veil whenever the shaykh fears for him that illumination will make him unbalanced.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Advancer" (al-Muqaddim): The shaykh should assign it to those who turn away from the wisdom of the Wise; hence, it brings them back to Him.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Inward" (al-Bātin): It is invoked by whoever is overcome by "outward illumination," and mental confusion is feared for him. The shaykh should give it to whoever is overcome by a feeling of nearness to God to the point where he might almost become unbalanced.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Most Holy" (al-Quddūs): The shaykh should order that it be invoked by those who are subjected in retreat to the doubts of the anthropomorphists and those who compare things with God or those who have a similar creed. So let them avail themselves of this Name by invoking it much! But the shaykh should not order that it be invoked by any others, especially by those whose creed is Ash'ari,

since it would make illumination impossible for them. Instead the sheykh should give them in exchange for this Name the Names "the Near" (al-Qerīb), "the Watcher" (ar-Raqīb), "the Loving" (al-Wadūd), and the likes of these Names.

His Name (exalted be He!) "the Examiner" (al-Mumtahin): The shaykhs use its signification: it makes their disciples fit for guidance, so that the shaykhs can test thereby their disciples' predispositions in order to find out which way they should proceed with their disciples toward God Most High. But they should not assign this Name in retreat except to someone who has suffered a misfortune, so that it reminds him of his Lord.

#### CHAPTER [IV]

##### ON CHOOSING THE TYPE OF REMEMBRANCE

Note that there are those who choose Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, Muḥammadun rasūlu'llāh ("There is no divinity but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God") at the beginning and at the end, and there are others who choose Lā ilāha illa 'llāh in the beginning and in the end confine themselves to Allāh. These latter are the majority. Then there are those who choose Allāh, Allēh and others who choose Huwa ("He"). He who affirms the first view advances as his proof that faith is not sound nor acceptable unless the Testimony of Messengerhood is connected with the Testimony of the Unity of God. They maintain:

If you say, "That is so only at the beginning of faith, but that if one's faith is established and becomes stable, then the two formulae can be separated," the answer is that if separation is not permitted in the beginning, then it is all the more fitting that it not be permitted in the end.

Do you not see that the call to prayer, which is one of the rituals of Islam, is not valid except on condition that the two Testimonies be always together? Just as the call to prayer never varies from the condition prescribing that the two Testimonies be joined together, so similarly the believer cannot change the condition that makes his faith acceptable through his uttering the two Testimonies. Hence, there is no way one can separate the two Testimonies. God Most High has said, "He misleadeth many thereby, and He guideth many thereby,"<sup>1</sup> up to His word (exalted be He!), "and they sever that which God ordered to be joined."<sup>2</sup>

One of the commentators has said, "God has commanded that the mention of the Prophet be connected with the mention of Himself; so whosoever separates them separates what God has decreed should be joined; and whosoever separates what God has commanded should be joined is called 'lost'."

God Most High has said, "We have exalted thy fame (dhikrak)."<sup>3</sup> Another of the commentators has said, "The verse means: 'I am not to be mentioned unless you are mentioned with Me'." It is maintained that if a claimant alleges that he is in the station of extinction (maqām al-fanā') and says "I see naught but God, and I contemplate naught but Him; therefore, I do not remember anyone but Him," the response is that, when Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq (may God be pleased with him!) brought all his wealth to the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!), the latter said to Abū Bakr, "What have you left for your family?" He replied, "I left God and His Messenger for them." He did not confine himself to saying Allāh, but rather he combined the two remembrances. Similarly, in the circumambulation of the Ka'bah, sand is prescribed for a reason; but when the reason vanishes, the sand remains.

As for the second invocation,<sup>4</sup> it is Lā ilāha illa 'llāh ("There is no divinity but God"), and its textual proof is in the words of God (exalted be He!): "Know that there is no divinity but God";<sup>5</sup> and in the words of the Prophet (on him be blessings and peace!): "The best thing that I and the Prophets before me have said is 'There is no divinity but God'."<sup>6</sup>

In this Testimony there is the negation (nafy) of any divinity apart from God and the affirmation (ithbāt) of the divinity of God Most High. No worship exists without there being implicit in it the meaning of "There is no divinity but God." Thus, ritual purity implies the

negation of uncleanness and the affirmation of ritual purity. In almsgiving, there is negation of the love of money and affirmation of the love of God; there is the manifestation of being in no need of the world, of being in need of God Most High, and of being satisfied with Him.

Also, for the heart filled with that which is other-than-God (ghayru 'llāh), there must be a formula of negation to negate the alterities (al-aghyār).<sup>7</sup> When the heart becomes empty, the minbar of the Divine Oneness is placed therein and the sultan of gnosis sits upon it. In general, only the best of things, the most universally beneficial, and the most significant are placed therein, because they are the prototypes against which the heart measures their opposites. Enough power must exist in that locus of the heart to permit it to confront every opposite. For that reason the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "The best thing that I and the Prophets before me have said is 'There is no divinity but God'."<sup>8</sup>

Thus, it is apparent that a certain preponderance must be given to the statement of anyone who maintains that the invocation Allāh, Allāh is special. For the knowers of God, it is one of the total number of invocations, amongst which "There is no divinity but God" is the best of all.

You must find the most appropriate and generally constant invocation, for that is the most powerful one; it has the most radiant light and loftiest rank. No one has the good fortune of sharing in all that except him who perseveres in it and acts in accordance with it until he masters it. For verily, God has not established mercifulness except as something all-embracing that helps one reach the hoped-for goal. So



whosoever negates His nature by "There is no divinity" (Lā ilāha) affirms his Being by "but God" (illa 'llāh).

The third invocation is the one that rejects all comparability between creatures and God (tanzīh). It is found in the phrases "Glory be to God" (subhāna 'llāh) and "Praise be to God" (al-hamdu lillāh). When that is manifest to the seeker, it is the fruit of the invocation of negation and of affirmation, as will be explained later, God willing.

The fourth invocation is Allāh. It is called the single invocation, because the invoker contemplates the Majesty and Sublimity of God, while being extinguished from himself. God Most High has said, "Say: Allāh. Then leave them to disport themselves with their idle talk."<sup>9</sup>

It is related that ash-Shiblī was asked by a man, "Why do you say Allāh and not Lā ilāhe ille 'llāh?" So ash-Shiblī answered,

Because Abū Bakr gave all his wealth to the point where not a thing remained with him. Then he took off a garment in front of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!). So the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "What did you leave for your family?" He answered, "Allāh." Likewise I say Allāh.

Then the questioner said, "I want a higher explanation than this." So ash-Shiblī said, "I am embarrassed to mention an expression of negation in His presence, while everything is His light." Then the man said, "I want a higher explanation than this." Ash-Shiblī answered, "I am afraid that I will die during the negation of the phrase before reaching the affirmation." The questioner again said, "I want a higher explanation than this." So ash-Shiblī said, "God Most High said to His Prophet, 'Say: Allāh. Then leave them to disport themselves with their idle talk.'"<sup>10</sup>

Then the young man got up and let out a shriek. Ash-Shiblī said Allāh. He screamed again; and ash-Shiblī said Allāh. Then he screamed a third time and died (may God Most High have mercy upon him!). The relatives of the young man gathered together and grabbed ash-Shiblī, charging him with murder. They took him to the caliph and were given permission to enter, and they accused him of murder. The caliph said to ash-Shiblī, "What is your response?" He answered, "A soul yearned, then wailed and aspired, then screamed, then was summoned, then heard, then learned, then answered. So what is my crime?" The caliph shouted, "Let him go!"

The reason for this teaching on the simple invocation is because God is the goal and the most worthy of being invoked; because the invoker of "There is no divinity but God" (Lā ilāhe ille 'llāh) might die between the negation and the affirmation; because saying Allāh only is easier on the tongue and closer to the heart's grasp; because the negation of imperfection in One for Whom imperfection is impossible is an imperfection; because being occupied with this formula conveys to one the grandeur of the Truth through the negation of alterities, since the negation of alterities actually derives from the heart's preoccupation with those very alterities. That is impossible for the person who is absorbed in the Light of Divine Unity.

Whoever says, "There is no divinity but God" (Lā ilāha ille 'llāh) is indeed occupied with what is other than the Truth; whereas whoever says Allāh is indeed occupied with the Truth. Hence, what a difference between the two positions! Likewise negating the existence of something is needed only when that thing comes to mind; but it does not come to mind save through the imperfection of one's state.

As for those who are perfect, for whom the existence of a partner alongside God would never occur to them, it is impossible that they be put under the obligation of negating the partner. Rather, for these people, only the remembrance of God comes to their minds or enters their imagination. So it suffices them to say Allāh. Also, God has said, "Say: Allāh. Then leave them to disport themselves with their idle talk."<sup>11</sup> Thus, He has enjoined upon the Prophet the remembrance of God (dhikru 'llāh) and has forbidden him idle discussion with them in their vanities and diversions. Holding to associationism (shirk) is idle talk and constitutes rushing headlong into that state of affairs.

It is more appropriate to be content with saying Allāh. The response of the one who upholds negation and affirmation with respect to the meaning of this Name is that the negation is for purification and the affirmation is for illumination. If you wished, you could say that the negation is for emptying oneself and the affirmation is for adorning oneself. If a tablet is not wiped clean of its figures, nothing can be written upon it. A single heart cannot serve as the place for two things, let alone for several things. If the heart is filled with the forms of sensory perceptions, it is rare that it would perceive the meaning of Allāh, even if one were to say Allāh a thousand times. When the heart is empty of all that is other-than-God, if one uttered Allāh only once, one would find such bliss that the tongue could not describe.

The fifth invocation is Huwa ("He").<sup>12</sup> Know that Huwa is a personal pronoun, having an indicative function. Among the exoterists, a sentence is not complete without its predicate, as in the case for "standing" (qā'id) or "sitting" (qā'id); so you say, "He is standing" (huwa qā'id) or "He is sitting" (huwa qā'id). But among the esoterists, Huwa indicates the ultimate goal of realization, and they are content

with it and need no further explanation. They recite it to extinguish themselves in the realities of nearness to God and in order to have the invocation of the Truth take possession of their innermost being. Therefore, what is other-than-He is nothing at all that one should refer to it.

One of the mentally confused was asked, "What is your name?"

He said, "Huwa."

"Where are you from?" He said, "Huwa."

"Where did you come from?" He said, "Huwa."

Whatever he was asked, he would only reply "Huwa." So someone said, "Perhaps you desire God." Then he screamed loudly and died.

If you say, "You have mentioned proofs for every invocation to the point where the observer thinks that each invocation is the best, which causes confusion when choosing a remembrance," I respond: Each invocation has its own state and time wherein it is better than another type of remembrance. For every station there is a particular utterance which is more appropriate to it; and for every invocation there is a spiritual state, which is more suitable to it, as will follow. Just as the Qur'ān is better than the invocation, the invocation in some situations is better than it for the invoker, as in bowing during prayer.<sup>13</sup>

## CHAPTER [V]

### THE GRADUAL ADVANCE OF THE SEEKER BY MEANS OF THE INVOCATIONS, AND THE MANNER WHEREIN HE TRANSFERS FROM DEGREE TO DEGREE, STATED BY WAY OF COUNSEL AND SUMMARIZATION

Whosoever perseveres in the invocation will find that lights come to him constantly and that the veils of invisible things are lifted from him. Whosoever is determined to seek guidance and follow a path of right conduct must search for a shaykh from amongst those who have realization, one who follows a path methodically, who has abandoned his passions, and who has firmly established his feet in the service of his Lord. How well said is the verse by a poet:

The Divine Truth is too lofty to be seen  
By the traveler on the path who is accompanied by passion.

When the seeker finds a guide, then let him obey what he orders him to do, and let him abstain from what he prohibits or restrains him from doing; otherwise, he will be lost. The seeker must enumerate the Names of God, adorn himself with the fundamental virtues, and abandon vices that arise from objectionable morals, deeds, and personal inclinations; he must be on his guard constantly, seek increased perseverance in devotional acts, and be sincere in desiring God Most High in every aim.

In the initiatic journey, there are diverse paths; you will not see any deviation or crookedness in a single one of them. I will begin now with an invocation of this way, which goes back to the Imām Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq. I learned it from one of the realized sages. This way consists

in the seeker's beginning by praying upon the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) without any other type of invocation. For he (may God bless him and grant him peace!) is the intermediary between God and us, our guide to Him, and our means of knowing him through gnosis. Attachment to the intermediary precedes attachment to the One Who sent him. Also, the place of sincerity is the heart: it may be devoted to what is other-than-God Most High. The ego is turned toward creatures; it is the soul that commands evil (ammārah bi's-sū'), that follows its passions, that inclines toward vanities. All of that consists of impurities that veil the heart from sincerity and from rightly turning towards God Most High.

The self is receptive to the commands of the devil. If it were not receptive to him, he would not find his way to the heart. Its receptivity towards the devil is a proof of its ignorance and of its absence from God Most High. Absence is a thick veil that hides the soul from its Creator. The veil is a darkness. So the seeker needs to dispel this darkness and remove these impurities. The darkness disappears with light. It is related that the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "Prayer upon me is a light." The elimination of impurities is through ritual purification. It is related in a ḥadīth that he (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "The hearts of believers are made pure and cleansed of rust through prayer upon me."

For that reason, in the beginning, the seeker is commanded to pray upon the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) in order to purify the locus of sincerity, for there can be no sincerity so long as defects abide within us. Through the remembrance of God's beloved (may God bless him and grant him peace!) comes the cessation of tribulations.

Frequent prayer upon him yields as its fruit the capacity to love him from the heart. The capacity to love him from the heart results in intense devotion to him and care for the qualities, character, and spiritual distinction he possesses. When we know that we cannot get to the point of following his deeds and virtues except after intense devotion to him, that we cannot reach that except through the utmost love for him, that we cannot attain to the utmost love for him except through the frequency of praying upon him--for whoever loves something remembers it frequently--then the seeker, because of that, begins with prayers upon the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!). They combine both the remembrance of God and the remembrance of His Messenger (may God bless him and grant him peace!).

It is related that the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "God Most High has said to me, 'O Muhammad, I have made you an invocation that is of My invocation. Whosoever remembers you, remembers Me and whosoever loves you, loves Me.'" So the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "Whosoever remembers me, remembers God, and whosoever loves me, loves God."

When the worshiper utters the phrase "O God" (Allāhumma), he is pronouncing an invocation of God. Know that invocation is of two types: one which does not comprise intimate conversation and one which does. The latter has a deeper, more far-reaching effect on the heart of the novice than does the invocation which does not include intimate discourse, because the one engaged in such intimate conversation makes his heart feel near the one whom he addresses. That is one of the things influencing the heart, clothing it with fear. Varily, one's utterance of "O God, pray . . ." (Allāhumma salli . . .) is an invocation and en

intimate talk, because one is asking for prayers upon the Prophet and that is an intimate conversation. Naught but you are present before Him.

Perhaps the secret of the religious prescription of prayers upon the Prophet is that the spirit of man is weak and unprepared to receive divine lights. So when the connection between his spirit and the Spirit of the Prophets becomes deep-rooted through prayers upon them, then the lights flowing forth from the Invisible World upon the Spirit of the Prophets will reflect upon the spirit of those praying upon them.

#### Section [1]

If many misdeeds and sins have been formerly committed by the seeker, then let him begin his path by frequently asking God for forgiveness until the fruit of so doing is apparent to him. For every invocation has its own fruit and sign which are well-known by the sages of the path. The fruit characteristic of invocations is of two kinds: the first is that which is visible to the heart in the waking state, and the second is that which the seeker sees during sleep.

With regard to the production of these fruits, seekers belong to one of three categories--by which I mean the fruits which grant them progress from one invocation to another. One seeker advances after the fruit that is manifested in the waking state; another advances because of what is manifested to the Spirit during sleep; and a third combines the fruits of waking and sleeping, and that is the most perfect of the categories. Fruits vary according to individuals; but they derive from one source. Thus, by virtue of a person's familiarity with nearness to God, there is made manifest to him what is not manifest to another; and

there is made manifest to another what is not manifest to him. Each one of them has produced fruit because that which has manifested itself to both stems from one source.

Fruits differ in accordance with the blessings bestowed on seekers, and those blessings revolve around immutable principles which are held as invariable by sages having realization. No seeker advances from one invocation to another until its particular fruit is manifest to him. When the signs of humility are evident in him, and when the traces of contrition and submission are manifest on his face, he should then be ordered to engage in an invocation that polishes the heart, and that is the prayer upon the beloved Prophet. This is the case if he had formerly employed his limbs in transgression and his soul had previously been inclined toward sins. As for the one who had formerly made efforts in virtue and who was not seduced by the soul that commands evil (en-nafs al-ammārah bi's-sū'), the first thing given to him is the prayer upon the Messenger; for by it he will reach the hoped-for goal.

Then the question should be posed: Is this seeker from amongst the common people or from amongst the knowledgeable? If he is from amongst the common people, he should begin with the complete prayer upon the Prophet and persevere in it until he understands its reality and until its hidden meaning appears to him. Then will he advance to another state.

If the seeker is from amongst the knowledgeable, he is not to be ordered to begin with the entire prayer, for his tongue is already moist from repeating it over and over again and from the frequency of usage. However, he will not grasp its hidden meaning because he cannot master the light of prayer upon the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!). So it behooves him to recite the entire prayer upon the

Prophet eleven times at the end of every ritual prayer (farīdah), making it a litany (wird) until his intellect (basīrah) discerns its meaning. And let him persevere in the aforementioned prayer day and night.

Be careful not to neglect to pronounce the word sayyid ("master"), for it contains a mystery which appears to whosoever persists in this devotion. When that mystery emerges and manifests itself, the seeker proceeds to an invocation higher than the previous one. So he invokes, saying: "O God, bless Your beloved, our master Muḥammad" (Allāhumma salli 'alā ḥabībika sayyidina Muḥammad). The invocation attaches him to the Creator and therein distinguishes him by the highest degrees of love above created beings. In order to advance to the loftiest degrees, the seeker must have both intention and resolution.

Let us mention now the sitting posture for the invocation. We say: It is in accordance with the rules of conduct (adeb) to sit in front of one's master in a submissive, humble, and unpretentious manner; to put one's head between one's knees; and to close one's eyes to all sensory perceptions. It is through this manner of sitting that the heart is recollected and cleansed of impurities and that lights, flashes, and mysteries come to it.

When you are seated in this fashion, take refuge in God from the accursed devil, then say: "In the Name of God." Then say immediately afterwards: "O God, I ask blessings upon our master Muḥammad" such-and-such a number of times, and you state the number you intend to do, with faith and expectation of a reward from God Most High, magnifying the proper due of the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) with honor and veneration. Then begin the prayer upon the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!).

When you have finished the number, or when, with a rosary (subhah) in hand, you have arrived at the place wherein you began, renew your intention, as we have previously mentioned. It could be that, with repetition, the mysteries contained in the words will appear; for there is no word that does not have a hidden mystery within it. Before the break of dawn or after it, let the seeker recite: "God testifies, as do the angels and the possessors of knowledge, that there is no divinity save Him, standing on justice. There is no divinity save Him, the Mighty, the Wise."<sup>1</sup>

Let him say after that:

I testify of God what He has testified of Himself and what the angels and possessors of knowledge among His creatures have testified of Him. I entrust this testimony with God until the time of my death, my entering the grave, my departing from it, and my meeting with my Lord. Verily, He does not fail that which is entrusted with Him.

The seeker repeats that three, five, or seven times every day. Within the depths of this utterance lies a blessing which sincerity towards God Most High brings forth. It has a result that perseverance reveals.

You must mention to your shaykh whatever states and the like come upon you and whatever you see in dreams. When the heart shines with the lights of prayer upon the Prophet and is purified of unclean desires, the fruit of your prayers becomes evident to you, the foundations of sincerity come to your heart, esoteric truths manifest themselves and furnish you with gifts from the Unseen World. Wisdom appears on your tongue, and your listener is amazed by your eloquence.

The novice should adopt two litanies (wird), one litany after the morning prayer and the other after the sunset prayer. As for those who are firmly established and are at the end of the path, invocation

occupies their hearts at all times. Guard against haste in proceeding from the prayer upon the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) before its fruit reveals itself to you. Add to it the invocation of negation and affirmation; that is to say: Lā ilāha illa'llāh, Muḥammadun rasūlu'llāh; that will be your tireless pursuit and occupation the rest of the time. It is a powerful invocation, more powerful than the first one; only the strong can bear it.

If the invoker is of mature mind, equilibrated disposition, sure-footed, and of a strong constitution, he is instructed to invoke frequently. If he is disturbed, weak, and hot-tempered, he is to be led with gentleness and a well-known litany assigned to him, based on the foregoing, until it imposes itself on his soul and strength flows to him bit by bit. At that point he can invoke frequently, because he has entered into the ranks of the strong. If he should increase the invocation before the appropriate time for him, then, with his hot temper, the invocation would burn him and he would be cut off from his goal.

So, persist in that invocation until the unity of the world is subsumed for you in a single sphere, so that with the eye of your heart you will see naught in the two worlds save the One. Then, you will pray the prayer for the dead for all beings, and you will utter Allāhu Akbar ("God is Most Great") four times for them. Praise and blame will be equal to you: you will see their criticism as a discipline and a reprimand for you, and their praise will be for you a trial. For it is by His command that their tongues move in praise or in blame of you. Whenever there remains any support for the ego within, even if it be only an atom's weight, then you are pretentious and have a devil who leads you astray.

When the fruit of the invocation of "negation and affirmation comes over you,"<sup>2</sup> then occupy yourself with the invocation of transcendence (tanzīh), which is that you say: "Glory be to God the Supreme" (subhāna llāha'l-ʿAzīm); and with an invocation praising the Prophet: "O God, bless our master Muḥammad and his family" (Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā sayyidina Muḥammadin waʿalā ālihi). When the fruits of this have become apparent and its mysteries made clear to you, at that time will you become worthy of invoking the simple invocation; then you will say Allāh, Allāh, Allāh--that permanently.

Be extremely careful not to neglect the remembrance of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!), for it is the key to every door with the permission of the Generous, the Giver. (We have been made most fortunate because we have come to understand this extraordinary method and have taken our share therein. Praise be to God, the Near, the Responder!)

Another method is the way of al-Junayd. It has eight conditions: maintaining one's ritual purity constantly; fasting constantly; being silent constantly; being in spiritual retreat constantly; invoking constantly, that is, invoking lā ilāha illa'llāh; attaching one's heart to one's shaykh constantly and benefitting from his knowledge of spiritual events by extinguishing one's free will in that of the shaykh's; rejecting self-centered thinking constantly; and abstaining constantly from resisting God Most High in whatever happens to one, whether good or bad, and from asking questions about Paradise and taking refuge from hell-fire.<sup>3</sup>

Another method is to decrease the intake of food gradually; for verily, both the devil and the ego derive their reinforcement from food. So, when food is decreased, their power decreases.

Another method is to entrust a reliable shaykh with authority over one's soul, so that he might choose whatever will reform the seeker. For verily, the novice bent on the path is like a child or youth or spendthrift: each must needs have a guardian or counselor or judge or authority who will assume responsibility for his affairs.

## CHAPTER [VI]

### ON THE INVOCATION DURING THE SPIRITUAL RETREAT

The retreat is in reality the conversation of the innermost being with God in such a manner that no one else is perceived. As for its form, it is that which allows one to reach this goal of devoting one's life to God Most High and withdrawing from all else.

With regard to retreat of the outer being, it polishes away from the mirror of the heart the forms engraved upon it ever since it forgot and mingled intimately with the world and whatever is in it. These forms are darkneses enveloped one within the other and assembled together. From them comes the heart's rust, which is forgetfulness. By means of the retreat, the invocation, fasting, ritual purity, silence, rejecting wrong thoughts, steadfastness, and oneness of purpose, the mirror of the heart is polished of its rust. For the retreat is like a pair of bellows, the invocation is like the fire, the file, and the hammer. Fasting and ritual purity are the instruments of polishing. Silence and rejecting wrong thoughts banish the inspirations coming from the darkneses. Steadfastness is the student and oneness of purpose the teacher. This retreat is a means to the real retreat mentioned previously.

Know that, if you wish to enter into the presence of God, obtaining knowledge from Him without the intermediary of secondary means, and being intimate with Him, then that will not be possible for you so long as an other-than-God lords it over your heart, for verily, you belong to whosoever has authority over you. Therefore, you must withdraw from

mankind and prefer the retreat to crowds. Indeed, your degree of closeness to the Truth is in proportion to your distance outwardly and inwardly from creatures.

You must rectify your religious creed ('aqidah) to bring it into line with the doctrine of the initiates and you must learn what constitutes acts of worship. Before the retreat, engage in spiritual discipline, namely, in refining moral character, in avoiding levity, and in bearing wrongs. It is rare that any good fortune can come from him whose illumination precedes his spiritual discipline. Thus, you must repent of sins, requite wrongs capable of being restituted through honor and money, purify your inner self of every objectionable trait, and restrict your inner being from wandering about in the degrees of existence. Rational thinking is the most injurious thing in all retreats: it neither provides good fruit to the one in retreat nor does it help the soul in its words and deeds in the degrees of existence.

Seclusion from the world, silence, and reducing one's food are necessary as is striving to avoid drinking water. Thus, when the soul is accustomed to solitude, enter the retreat at that point. When you seclude yourself from people, beware of their making for you and drawing near to you; for the purpose in withdrawing from people is to leave their company behind; the purpose is not in renouncing their very forms.<sup>1</sup> Rather, the goal is that your heart and ears not become a receptacle for the excessive chatter that people bring; otherwise the heart would not be purified of the senseless jabber of the world. So, close your door to mankind and the door of your room to your family, and occupy yourself with the remembrance of the Lord of the world. Whosoever withdraws but opens a door, people will make for him. That is a



seeker of leadership and fame, one who is driven away from God's door: perdition is closer to him than the sole of his sandal.

Watch out for self-deception in this station, for most people have perished therein. The person in retreat should be courageous, bold, immovable upon hearing a great outcry or the tumbling down of a wall or the sudden appearance of a frightful thing. He should be neither cowardly nor reckless, but be given to much silence and always meditating; he should neither rejoice when praised nor suffer when blamed. He should carry out the necessary conditions of his retreat; for no one else will undertake to do that for him.

Hence, if he is of such a nature, he should enter the retreat; if not, so be it. Then let him use the solitude to discipline himself until he gets used to it and the ego no longer takes notice of him just as it no longer takes notice of acts of worship. Following on that, let him enter the retreat relaxed, eager, good-natured, free of striving and difficulties, ready to devote himself exclusively to the invocation and to give up any desires. For indeed, striving and effort in the retreat eliminate concentration—which is its spirit—for they are a distraction in time; hence, no inspiration will come upon you. Do your striving, therefore, in solitude before entering the retreat until your soul is familiar with it. And when, in your retreat, you are burdened by anything, such as sleeplessness, hunger, thirst, cold, heat, mental distractions, or loneliness, then leave it for your solitude until you become stronger. When you want to re-enter, perform a major ritual ablution, clean your clothes, and formulate the intention of drawing near unto God Most High.

As for the physical structure of the cell for your retreat, let its height be as tall as you are, its length as long as your prostration is, and its width as wide as your sitting posture. There should be no hole in it through which light can penetrate into the retreat; and in a house inhabited by people, it should be far from noises, and its door should be solid and small. It is best that one spend the night close to the door of the cell and not move around very much inside. It has been said: "Do not exceed the required prayers and supererogatory devotional exercises." And also: "Rather, one should limit oneself to the required prayers and to two prostrations at each ritual purification from impurity; one should face the direction of prayer and remain in a state of ritual purity."

Let the water-closet be close to your cell; and be on your guard against any unusual air current when you emerge therefrom, for this creates a dispersing influence in you for a long time. Do not vary the discipline you are following. If you go out to take care of a call of nature, close your eyes and ears. Have your food with you already prepared or kept behind the door of your cell.

Amongst the conditions for undertaking a spiritual retreat is that no one know that you are doing it. But if that is unavoidable, then let it be the closest person to you. He should ignore what you are doing and not be aware of what your intention is, because people would expect him to divulge the reason why he has gone out to see you; and this is a major obstacle which chases illumination away.

With regard to eating during spiritual discipline, solitude, and retreat, you should take a morsel of food and invoke the Creator's name over it with humility, need, presence of mind, vigilance, and attentiveness until you are aware that it has reached the stomach. At that

moment take another morsel and do the same with it as with the first; and continue in such a manner until your meal is finished. You should sip your water and interrupt your breathing several times in the process. Do not fast excessively nor overeat to discomfort. As soon as your stomach is empty, hasten to obtain food in such a manner that no man suffers harm thereby through inconvenience nor, for that matter, any animal. Let no one else but you prepare food for you.

If you are unaware of your constitution, then submit yourself to an examination by physicians, who will prescribe food for you that will agree with your nature and improve your constitution. Tell them what you wish to do in the way of minimizing your daily needs, avoiding excess, and the heaviness that leads to sleep and sluggishness. They will prescribe food for you that will permit you to live on it for many days, during which time you will need no further food nor have to go forth to get it. The whole point is that you not use anything but light food which is suitable to your nature, slow to digest, and filling, which requires no effort on your part. Stick to whatever brings about an equilibrated temperament; if its dryness is excessive, it leads to fantasies and delirium; but if an inspiration itself produces the indisposition, then that is desirable.

Wear clothes that permit your body to be equilibrated therein and that are of a type creating no misgivings in you, as in the case when you observe the rules for eating. You should have a clean cloth with which to handle your private parts and which you should wash often. Neither lie down nor sleep except when you are overcome by fatigue. Kill no animal--neither an ant nor anything else. If you fear getting vermin in your hair, shave your head. Dress with your cleanliness in

view, changing your clothes often before any vermin can attach itself to them and trouble you. Tarry not an instant without being in a state of ritual purity.

The difference between an angelic inspiration and a satanic one is that coolness and bliss follow the angelic inspiration. You experience no pain nor do you see any form undergo a change; and it leaves behind knowledge. Agitation of the body, pain, and confusion follow the satanic inspiration; and it leaves behind bewilderment. A suggestive thought (al-khāṭir) is that which comes to the heart from the "speech" of the inspiration wherein the servant plays no role.

Whatever is a "speech" can be classified into four categories. One, divine speech; it is the first of the suggestive thoughts, and Sahl (may God be pleased with him!) called it "the first cause" and the "abode" of suggestive thoughts; it never errs, and it may be known by its power, authority, and immovability when one seeks to repel it. Two, angelic speech; it is the motive for doing what is recommended or required or, in general, everything in which there is good; it is called "inspiration" (ilhām). Three, psychical speech; it is that wherein the self has its share; it is called "notion" (hājis). Four, satanic speech; this is that which provokes opposition to the Truth. God Most High has said, "The devil promiseth you destitution and enjoineth on you lewdness."<sup>2</sup> The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) has said, "The call of the devil leads to the denial of Truth and threatens one with evil." It is called "a diabolic suggestion" (waswās) to be weighed with the scales of the sacred Law.

So when there is proximity to God, then it is of the first two categories; and when there is aversion or opposition with regard to the sacred Law, then it is of the last two categories; but it is of a

doubtful nature with respect to things permitted (al-mubāḥ). To the first two categories belongs that which is nearer to opposing the self; and to the last two belongs that which is nearer to passion and to agreement with the self. The distinction between the two is easy for the one who is truthful, pure-hearted, ever present with God. But God knows best!

Let your invocation be the all-embracing Name, which is Allāh, Allāh, Allāh, or if you so wish, Huwa, Huwa, Huwa; and do not violate this remembrance. Be careful lest your tongue pronounce it while other-than-He is in your heart. Let your heart be the one who utters, and your ear the one who is attentive to this invocation until the "speaker" (an-nāṭiq) emanates from your Self (sirr). When you feel the emergence of the Speaker within you through the invocation, do not abandon the spiritual condition wherein you find yourself.

## CHAPTER [VII]

### THE ONENESS OF GOD

The Imām el-Ghezālī (may God Most High have mercy on him!) said,

Affirming the unity of God (tawḥīd) is that one see all things as coming from God Most High in a vision preventing one from giving undue consideration to intermediate causes. Thus, one does not see good or evil except as coming from Him. The fruit of that is trust in God, refraining from complaining about people, avoiding anger toward them, contentment, and resignation to the judgment of God Most High. It is as if the affirmation of God's Oneness were a rare jewel having two coverings, one of which is farther from the essence than the other; people devote themselves to the name of the covering and neglect the essence.

The first covering is to say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh ("There is no divinity but God") with your tongue. This is called "affirming the Oneness of God," because it is opposite to the doctrine of the Trinity which the Christians declare; but the affirmation might emanate from a hypocrite whose interior contradicts his exterior.

The second covering is that one not have in one's heart any opposition to or rejection of the content of this formula. Rather, the literal meaning of the formula embraces both the adherence to it as a dogma and the belief in it. It is the profession of God's Oneness to which most people adhere. The theologians are the watchmen who protect this covering from the confusion of innovators.

The third covering,<sup>1</sup> which is the essence, is that one see all things from God Most High in a vision, preventing one from giving undue consideration to intermediate causes, and to worship Him with a devotion

that isolates Him from all else, so that one does not worship other-than-Him. Following passion is a deviation from the affirmation of God's Oneness, inasmuch as everyone who follows his passion has taken it as his god. God Most High has said, "Hest thou seen him who chooseth for his god his own passion?"<sup>2</sup> The Prophet (upon him be blessings and peace!) has said, "For God, the most hateful deity worshipped in the world is passion."

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Whosoever reflects deeply will find that all creatures affirm the Oneness of God Most High in accordance with the subtleness of their "breaths." Were that not the case, punishment would have overwhelmed them. For in everyone of the atoms of the world, and in whatever is smaller than that, there is one of the mysteries of the Name of God Most High. It is by virtue of that mystery that each one, according to the species wherein it finds itself, understands and acknowledges the Oneness of God, knowingly or unknowingly, as God Most High has said, "And unto God falleth prostrate whosoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, as do their shadows in the morning and the evening hours."<sup>3</sup> Each one affirms God's Oneness in every station with whatever befits His Lordship and with whatever the attributes of servanthood are capable of, in accordance with the destiny allotted all creatures for the realization of the Oneness of God.

A gnostic has said:

He who glorifies God (al-musabbih) glorifies with his inner Self the reality within the pure attributes of his meditation in the domain containing the marvels of the Realm (al-Malakūt) and the minute

subtleties of the world of Power (al-Jabarūt). The seeker (as-sālik) glorifies God by invoking Him in the oceans of the heart. The novice (al-murīd) glorifies God with his heart within the oceans of meditation. The lover (al-muḥibb) glorifies God with his Spirit in the oceans of his longing. The gnostic (al-ʿārif) glorifies God with his inner being in the oceans of the Unseen. The veracious (al-siddīq) glorifies God with the Self of his inner being in the "mystery" of holy lights which move about within the prototype of the names of God's attributes; and this he does with steadfast surefootedness at different times.

## Chapter [VIII]

### GNOSIS

Gnosis (ma'rifah) is the perception of something as it is in its essence and attributes. The gnosis of the Creator (may He be glorified and exalted!) is one of the most difficult of all types of gnosis, for God has no likeness. Yet in spite of that, God Most High has enjoined on the Creation, including mankind, jinn, angels, and devils, the gnosis of His Essence, His Names, and His Attributes: it is affirmed with respect to both the animal and nonanimal kingdoms. Everything which has being--except God Most High--is conscious of the Being of its Creator to the extent of its capacity.

God Most High has said, "There is not a thing but hymneth His praise."<sup>1</sup> That includes man, angels, animals, minerals, plants, air, earth, and water. God Most High praises those who have gnosis of Him and censures those who are ignorant of Him and those who deny Him.

Gnosis is of two types: general and particular. General gnosis of God Most High, which is incumbent upon all who must observe the precepts of religion, is to affirm His Being, to declare Him to be boly in a manner worthy of Him, and to describe Him as He actually is and in the manner in which He describes Himself; for He is known even if He is not subject to conditions and cannot be encompassed.

The second type of gnoeis is particular gnoeis. It has been said that it is a state that arises from contempletion. The gnostic (al-'arif) is the one whom God Most High causes to contemplate His Essence, Attributes, Names, and Acts, while the knower (al-'alim) is the one to

whom God Most High makes that known, not through contemplation, but rether through certitude. It is said that gnosis is a type of certitude that occurs through serious effort in religious devotions.

The Imām al-Ghezālī (may God Most High have mercy on him!) has said:

God is much too great for the senses to reech Him, or for reason and logic to plumb the depths of His mejeaty. Indeed, He is much too greet for anyone but Himself to plumb the depths of His Majesty or for anyone but Himself to know Him. Verily, no one knows God but God. The highest degree of gnosis that His servants can ettein is the realization that true gnostic knowledge of Him is impossible for them. Furthermore, no one can know that in its totality except a Prophet or a righteous saint (ṣid-dīq).

As for the Prophet, he has cleerly expreesed this by saying, "I cannot enumerate the ways of preising Thee; Thou ert as Thou hes praised Thyself." As for the righteous saint, he says, "The incepcity to ettain realization is a realization."

It has been said that souls, after leaving their bodies, are not distinguished from one another save as regards the type of gnosis and knowledge imprinted upon them; nor will you be able, after that separation, to find any kind of gnosis or knowledge except what wes there originally. Humer nature will be reised on the Day of Judgment in eccordence with the form of its knowledge; physicial bodies will be resurrected in accordance with the form of their deeds, whether good or bad. When the soul leaves the world of religious commandments, the homelend for geining the Hereafter and ascending thereto, it reeps the fruit of what it had sown. Its discernment in the Hereafter is not greeter than its discernment in this world except in terms of unveiling and clerity. Contempletion and vision will be commensurate with one's knowledge of God Most High, His Names and His Attributes, because gnosis

in this world will be transformed in the Hereafter as a contemplative vision just as a seed is transformed into a spike of grain. Just as the one who has no seed will have no crops, so too the one who has no gnosis in this world will have neither vision nor contemplation in the Hereafter. The differences of vision as regards the degrees of illumination are due to the differences in the degrees of gnosis.

Subtle point: Whosoever wants to light a lamp needs seven things: flint, stone, tinder, sulphur, a lampstand, a wick, and oil. So when a servant seeks the lamp of gnosis, he must have the flint of effort: "As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths . . ."2, and the stone of humility "Call upon your Lord humbly . . ."3. As for the tinder, it is the burning of the soul. God Most High has said, ". . . and restrained his soul from passion."4 The fourth is the sulphur of turning to God repentantly: "Turn often in repentance unto your Lord . . ."5 The fifth is the lampstand of patience: "But be patient! Verily, God is with the patient."6 The sixth is the wick of gratitude: "And be grateful for the blessings of your Lord."7 The seventh is the oil of contentedness with the decrees of God, Who has said, "Bear calmly the judgment of thy Lord."8

It was related that there was a good man whose brother had died. He saw him in a dream and said to him, "What did God do with you?" He answered, "He had me enter Paradise where I eat, drink, and mete." The other said, "I did not ask you about that. Have you seen your Lord?" He answered, "No one sees Him except the one who knows Him."

## Section [1]

### On Whether the Invocation or Reciting the Qur'ān Is Better

The Imām al-Ghazālī (may God have mercy on him!) has said:

Reciting the Qur'ān is the most excellent thing for all people except in all the beginning states of the traveler on the path to God Most High and in some of his states at the end. Indeed, the Qur'ān includes the categories of gnostic knowledge, spiritual states, and guidance along the way. As long as the servant is in need of improving his character and attaining gnostic knowledge, the Qur'ān is the more suitable for him.

If the Qur'ān is better for you, then you must recite it and reflect upon it. Consider in your recitation what qualities and attributes God praises therein, the ones with which He describes those servants of His whom He loves, who are characterized by them. And see what God Most High reproves in the Qur'ān, regarding the qualities and attributes characteristic of the one whom He hates, and avoid them. God Most High did not mention them to you nor reveal them to you in His Book nor present them to you except to have you act accordingly. Strive to be as mindful of the Qur'ān in deed as you are mindful of it in your recitation. Indeed, no one will be more severely chastised on the Day of Judgment than the person who has memorized a verse then forgotten it. Likewise, whosoever has learned a verse by heart, then neglected acting upon it, that verse will be a witness against him and a source of grief for him on the Day of Judgment.

The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) has said, "The likeness of the believer who recites the Qur'ān is the citron: its fragrance is sweet."9 By that he means chanting and recitation; they are indeed breaths flowing out, which he likens to fragrances; their

scent is the breaths. Then he continues: "... and its taste is delicious." By that he means faith. Therefore, the Prophet said, "He who is content with God as Lord, with Islam as his religion, with the Qur'ān as his model, and with Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace) as Prophet and Messenger has tasted the flavor of faith." He linked flavor to faith. Then he said, "The likeness of the believer who does not read the Qur'ān is like the date: its taste is good (insofar as he is a nominal believer), but that has no fragrance" (insofar as he is not conforming in his behavior to that which he reads, even if he is one of those who have memorized the Qur'ān).

Then the Prophet said, "The likeness of the hypocrite who reads the Qur'ān is sweet basil: its fragrance is good" (because the Qur'ān is good and because during the time of the chanting and the state of recitation there is nothing but the breaths of the chanter and reciter), but "its taste is bitter" (because hypocrisy is inward disharmony, for sweetness belongs to faith and is considered delicious). Then he said, "The likeness of the hypocrite who does not read the Qur'ān is the colocynth: its taste is bitter and it has no fragrance" (because in this case he is not even reading).

In this regard, the form of every good word, whether from believer or hypocrite, and with which God Most High is pleased, is as the form of the Qur'ān, comparatively speaking. However, the rank of the Qur'ān is not hidden: for no utterance that draws us close to God is comparable to the Word of God. It behooves the invoker to take his invocation from those invocations mentioned in the Qur'ān in order to invoke God therein and to be a reciter during the invocation. He should neither

praise God nor glorify Him nor say "There is no divinity but God" except with what is to be found in the Qur'ān, holding fast to it.

Al-Ghazālī said,

When the servant is not in need of refining his character and attaining gnostic knowledge, but rather has gone beyond that to the point where discernment has taken hold of his heart, so that it is hoped that this will lead him to immersion in God, then perseverance in the invocation of God is more suitable.

Indeed, the Qur'ān addresses his mind and carries him off to the gardens of Paradise. The novice traveling to God should not turn his attention to Paradise and its gardens. Rather, he should make his aspirations one aspiration and his invocations one invocation until he realizes the degree of extinction and immersion, neither persisting nor abiding therein. When he is brought back to himself, then reciting the Qur'ān will benefit him. This state is very rare and precious like "red sulphur" (al-kihrīt al-ahmar): it is spoken of but is not to be found.

Reciting the Qur'ān is the most excellent thing in an absolute sense because it is the best act in every state, except in the state wherein the Divine Interlocutor distracts one from His Word, since the point of the Qur'ān is gnosis of the One Who uttered the Qur'ān and gnosis of His Beauty, and immersion in Him. The Qur'ān goes before one to God and guides one toward Him. Whoever is close to the Goal pays no attention to the path.

Previously, it was said that the reality of the invocation is when the Invoked takes possession of the heart, and He is One. Separation and multiplicity exist before that for as long as the invoker is in the station of invoking with the tongue or with the heart. At that point, the invocation is divisible into what is preferable or otherwise: its

excellence depends on the qualities which are expressed through the invocations and attributes.

The Names belonging to God Most High are divided into those that are real with respect to servants but figurative in relation to God Most High, like the Patient, the Grateful, the Compassionate, and the Avenger; and into those that are real when pertaining to Him but figurative when employed in regard to others. Among the greatest of invocations is Lā ilāha illa 'llāh al-Hayyū 'l-Qayyūm ("There is no divinity but God the Living, the Self-Subsistent"), because the most supreme Name of God is found therein. The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) said, "The most supreme Name of God is found in the verse of the Throne and in the Family of 'Imrān."<sup>10</sup>

The two Names<sup>11</sup> are not associated except in regard to this Supreme Name. It contains a mystery the mentioning of which is too subtle for your understanding. The extent to which symbolic allusion to it is possible is that your saying Lā ilāha illa 'llāh causes you to perceive the Unity of God. The meaning of the Oneness of God in essence and degree is real with respect to God Most High and is not to be interpreted. However, with regard to other-than-His the meaning is figurative and interpretable; and the same holds true for al-Hayy ("the Living").

The meaning of al-Hayy ("the Living") is "the one who is aware of himself," while the dead person is one who has no awareness of himself. The meaning is also real in regard to God Most High, not figurative. Al-Qayyūm ("the Self-Subsistent") perceives His Being as self-subsisting. Indeed everything is sustained by Him. Al-Qayyūm is also real in regard to God Most High, not figurative, nor is it to be found in something else.

Apart from those two, the other Names which indicate Acts, like the Merciful (ar-Rahīm), the Equitable (al-Muqsit), the Gatherer (al-Jāmi'), the Just (al-'Adl), and so forth, are subject to whatever denotes the Attributes because the sources of Actions are the Attributes. The Attributes are the principles; the Actions are the consequences. As for the other Attributes which indicate Power, Knowledge, Will, Speech, Hearing, and Vision, it is understood that what they affirm regarding God Most High is the intelligible contents of their literal meaning. It is quite wrong to say that the intelligible contents of their literal meaning are realities that go with the attributes of man, his speech, his power, his knowledge, his hearing, and his vision. Instead, the intelligible contents are realities that are impossible to affirm of man. Therefore, a kind of interpretation has to be figured out for these terms.

Almost in the same category are such statements as "Glory be to God" (Subhāne 'llāh), "Praise be to God" (al-hamdu lillāh), "There is no divinity but God" (Lā ilāha illa 'llāh), and "God is Most Great" (Allāhu Akbar). "Glory be to God" is a declaration of His Holiness, which is real with regard to Him: the truly Most Holy (al-Quddūs) is not to be conceived except in regard to Him. Your expression "Praise be to God" connotes the ascription of all blessings to God. It is real inasmuch as He is really alone in all His actions without this having to be interpreted. He (exalted and blessed be He!) alone is deserving of praise, since absolutely no one ever has any association with Him in His deeds, just as the pen has no association with the writer in deserving praise for good handwriting. Any blessing seen to come from someone else is subject to His use, like the pen; so He alone is deserving of praise.



Your saying "God is Most Great" does not mean that He is greater than something else, since there is nothing else alongside of Him, so that it could be said that He is greater than it. Rather, everything other-than-He is one of the lights of His Omnipotence. Sunlight has no rank in juxtaposition with the sun, so that it could be said that the sun is greater than it; instead, it has the rank of subordination. Rather, the meaning of Allāhu Akbar is that He is much too great to be perceived by the senses or for the depths of His Majesty to be reached by reason and logic, and indeed, that He is much too great to be known by an other-than-He; for truly, no one knows God but God.

#### Section [2]

The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) said, "The best thing that I and the Prophets before me have said is Lā ilāha illa'llāh."<sup>12</sup> God Most High has mentioned it in His Noble Book in thirty-seven passages. It is a formula which combines negation and affirmation: the division is an all-encompassing one that alternates between negation and affirmation. Only he who knows what this formula contains can know its value, as shown in the following discussion; for it is the expression of Unity.

Nothing resembles Unity, for if anything resembled it, it would not be One, but two or more. There is nothing that can measure it. Only that which is of equal value or of analogous nature can measure it. But there is nothing of equal value or of analogous nature. That is the obstacle which prevents Lā ilāha illa'llāh from being measured. The majority of religious scholars view associationism (shirk) as that which opposes the Oneness of God. It is not correct, on the part of the

servant, to hold to that view while maintaining the existence of God's Unity. Man is either an associator or a unitarian. Hence, only associationism can take the measure of Unity, but they cannot meet in the same scale.

As for the angel who records man's deeds, he cannot make the scale incline on the Day of Judgment except with the scroll (bitāqah) that bears the Testimony of Faith. That is what the balance encompasses because Lā ilāha illa'llāh is both written and created in speech; and were it given to everyone, then whosoever pronounced it would not enter hellfire. However, God wishes that its excellence be seen only by those who have a certain standing with the angel who records men's deeds. God wills that some monotheists not see it and that it not be put on the balance except after they have entered hellfire. For when no monotheist remains standing in judgment, one whom God has decreed should enter hellfire and emerge therefrom as a result of intercession or Divine Providence, then the recording angel is summoned. So no one remains standing in judgment then except the one who will enter Paradise, who has no share in hellfire; and he will be the last creature to have his deeds weighed. Indeed, the formula Lā ilāha illa'llāh has a beginning and an end. For the angel who records men's deeds, its beginning might very well be its end.

#### Section [3]

In general, only the best of all things, the most widely beneficial, or the most significant has been imposed upon us by God, because He compares those things to many opposites. Inescapably, in that very thing imposed on us, there must in general be found a power that can

counter any opposite. The Prophet (on whom be blessings and peace!) said, "The best thing that I and the Prophets before me have said is Lā ilāha illa'llāh."<sup>13</sup>

From this, it is evident that a certain probability attaches to the claim of the person who holds that saying Allāh, Allāh or Huwa, Huwa is the most special invocation, for it is among the sum of expressions of which Lā ilāha illa'llāh is the best, according to the knowers of God. So you must invoke Lā ilāha illa'llāh, for it is the most powerful invocation and possesses the most radiant light: no one is aware of that save he who perseveres in it and acts in accordance with it until he masters it. (For, indeed, God Most High has not sent His mercy except to cover all creatures and to help mankind reach the hoped-for goal.) This is according to the belief of some people. For those who see a hierarchy in the invocations that conforms to the hierarchy of stations and states, the best invocation in any situation will be that which is compatible with it, as was previously said.

Know that among the gnostics are those who choose silence over the invocation in the end. It is related that he (on him be blessings and peace!) said, "Whoever knows God has a tongue that is wearied." It is related that al-Junayd (may God have mercy on him!) was speaking when ash-Shibli screamed and said, "Allāh!" So al-Junayd said, "Absence (al-ghaybah) is prohibited!" The meaning is that if you are absent (ghā'ib), then the invocation of the Unseen (al-Ghā'ib) is absent; but if you are present (hāqir), then mentioning the Name in a state of presence (al-haḍrah) is bad manners.<sup>14</sup>

Nota bene: Beware of showing enmity towards the people who invoke Lā ilāha illa'llāh; for verily, God has put universal sanctity in it.

They are God's saints, and if they were to err with a quantity of mistakes equal to the earth's weight, while not associating anyone with God, He would meet them with an equal amount of forgiveness. It is forbidden to wage war against someone whose sanctity is established. God has mentioned the punishment in this world and the next for the one who wages war against God. You must not take as your enemy anyone whom God has not informed you of his being an enemy of God. If you are not aware of his situation, then the least of your responses should be to disregard his affair. When you have come to realize that he is an enemy of God--and this is nothing but associationism--then wash your hands of him, as did Abraham, the friend of God (on him be peace!), with respect to his father Āzar.

God Most High has said, "... but when it had become clear unto him that he [his father] was an enemy of God, he [Abraham] disowned him . . . "<sup>15</sup> That is your standard of measurement. God Most High has also said, "Thou wilt not find a people who believe in God and the Last Day loving those who oppose God and His Messenger, even though they be their fathers . . ." as did Abraham the friend of God (on him be peace!) "... or their sons or their brethren or their clan."<sup>16</sup>

Until you know that, show no enmity toward the servants of God, so far as is possible, even by word. You should hate the action, not the person himself, whereas with regard to the enemy of God, he himself is to be hated. The Prophet (on him be blessings and peace!) said that God says, "Whoever shows Me his hostility towards a righteous person, then I shall declare war on him."<sup>17</sup>

Indeed, when one does not know someone and treats him as an enemy, he does not fulfill his duty to God regarding His creatures. He does not know what God will do to him until he turns away from that person

and takes him as his enemy. If that person's outward state is known, even though he might be in fact an enemy of God--which you do not know--assist him, nevertheless, in performing his duty to God and be not hostile toward him; otherwise, the Divine Name az-Zāhir ("the Outward") will oppose you before God.<sup>18</sup> Do not cause God to have proofs against you, for you will perish. Indeed, "to God belongs the most far-reaching proof."<sup>19</sup>

Treat the servants of God with compassion and mercy, since God has provided for them in their state of unbelief in spite of His knowledge of them. He does not give them sustenance except as a result of His knowledge that the state in which they are is not actually due to themselves. Rather, it is due to God, as we have previously mentioned in a general manner. Verily, God is the Craator of everything; their unbelief is craated in them. To speak in a more precise fashion, no condition appears in any existant being except in so far as it corresponds, in the pre-existential state, to its immutable prototype to which it conforms and belongs and out of which it emerges. Thus, to God belongs "the far-reaching proof" against everyone.

Encompass with your mercy and compassion all animals and creatures. Do not say, "This is inanimata and has no awareness." Indeed, it does; it is you yourself who have no awareness! So let existence be as it is, and be merciful towards it with the mercifulness of the Creator in the midst of His creation.

#### Section [4]

There are ten dangers in journeying to God Most High which may block some travelers on their way: seeing one's own deeds; prolonging

hope; having egocentric notions about reaching sanctity; being dependent on the attention of mankind; being content with the vision of dreams; delighting in the litany (wird); taking pleasure in inspiration (wārid); being reassured by promises; being satisfied with pretense; and being inattentive to God.

The signs of falling from the sight of God are three: being content with oneself; not being content with God; and competing with mankind by fate and divine decree.<sup>20</sup>

The signs of nearness to God Most High are three: abandoning chance; carrying out one's duty; and humility toward God amongst creatures.

The signs of reaching God Most High are three: understanding God Most High; listening closely to God Most High; and learning from God.

The signs of devotion to God are three: abandoning choice; rejecting self-determination; and denying self-willing.

The signs of acting on behalf of God Most High are: exchanging ephemeral attributes for permanent ones; transitory qualities for permanent ones; and effacing the ephemeral essence in the eternal Essence. "God bestoweth His sovereignty on whom He will. God is all encompassing and all-knowing."<sup>21</sup>

The signs of the soundness of the servant's love for his Lord are three: absence of self-willing; pleasure in every event which takes place through divine decree; and seeing the perfection of the Beloved in everything and being content with Him in everything through submission to Him in all things.

The signs of the permanency of God's love for His servant are three: His contentment with him in all that he does; His permitting him

to speak about Him; and His revealing the divine mysteries to him by virtue of His far-reaching wisdom, which guides the servant to Him.

#### CHAPTER [IX]

#### WHAT INITIATES ON THE PATH MUST IMPOSE UPON THEMSELVES AND PRACTICE CONSTANTLY

Know that God's path is far from discord and from manifestations of the ego's inclinations. There is no excuse, pardon, or peace of mind in whatever causes one to leave the path. Among themselves, the initiateda censure verbally and do not pardon whatever the sacred Law does not permit; but they are tolerant of the rights of others and give them their due.

Among the conditions imposed on the followers of this way are: that they treat people justly of their own accord but not demand justice from anyone; that they accept excuses from outsiders but not excuse themselves; that they offer assistance but not take sides; that they treat people with mercy and compassion; that they give good counsel in whatever transpires among them; and that no one among them should hand over to his companion whatever is not required by their order. This is the case if they are equal in rank; but if the one who made the move is of higher rank, than handing it over is obligatory. There should be no hatred or grudge among them, nor should they envy each other with respect to the gifts of God. None of them should say, "I have" or "I own" or "my property" or "my slipper" or "my robe." They are all equal with respect to whatever God bestows on them. None among them should own possessions not had by his companions.

It is part of their discipline to renounce keeping company with women, sitting with them, and being fraternal with them, and to renounce

the comradeship of youth and conversing with them. One of their obligations is that they not make promises, for whosoever errs and makes a promise is obligated to keep it, to be true to his word, and to be scrupulous in speech, food, sight, and so on. He must not practice dissimulation but must observe the code of conduct of the Law, both in its minor and major points, if he knows them. If he does not know them, then with respect to every situation in which he finds himself, he asks, "What does the Law prescribe therein?" Whosoever betrays the code of the Law is more likely to betray the divine secrets. God Most High only bestows His secrets on the trustworthy.

It is part of their discipline that they not choose, because they go along with God's choice for them; and that they not dwell on indifferent actions,<sup>1</sup> because it is a waste of time. Whosoever embarks upon this path while married should not divorce or while single should not marry until he perfects himself. When he has perfected himself, then he will act in this matter in accordance with what his Lord inspires him to do.

One of the conditions binding upon the seeker is that he should not insist upon getting a handout, even though he has demonstrated piety while asking; nor should the seeker accept charity in order to give it to someone. For indeed, that would be a veil for him. As for the perfected person, he may take or refrain from so doing, if he wishes, because he acts in accordance with what God inspires him to do in the circumstances, as in the example of the disciple with his shaykh: just as the disciple is not to be opposed in carrying out whatsoever his shaykh instructs him to do, likewise the shaykh is not to be opposed in

whatsoever he does, because it issues from God, if he is in truth a shaykh.

Another of their conditions is to renounce opposition unless the one opposing is higher in rank, because then it is a discipline. If the seeker is subordinate to him in rank, then he should keep silent; if he refuses, then he has nullified a fundamental principle in his order that he had agreed to observe. For they are the people of truth who speak only about what they contemplate.

When the novice visits a shaykh, let him empty his heart of everything that is within him so that he may be receptive to what the shaykh gives him and in order that no rejection occur. If there should occur whatsoever is unacceptable to him, he should blame himself and say, "This is a station which I have not reached," and not attribute the mistake to the shaykh. Whosoever goes to see a shaykh in order to test him is ignorant indeed. He should not ask of the shaykhs just anything he likes; rather, he should ask of them knowledge about the deceptions of the ego and their remedies and about the things revealed in the states of the novices, not the states of the gnostics.

When initiates see someone in a state of disobedience, they should not believe that he is that way persistently; they should say, "Perhaps he will repent towardly," or "Perhaps he is among those who are not harmed by sins due to the Creator's providential care of him with respect to his behavior." They should not believe that there is evil in anyone except in the case of the person about whom God has made known to them the consequences of his behavior; however, they do not reproach anyone.

The people of this way do not see themselves as better than anyone else. Whosoever views himself as better than someone else without

knowing his own rank and that of the other person ultimately, and not just momentarily, is ignorant of God, deceived, and no good is to be found in him, whatever gnostic perceptions he might have been given. Contempt of knowledge from the point of view of Reality is contempt of God Most High, and it is the antithesis of sanctity.

Among their attributes: purifying the soul of every base disposition, adorning it with every sublime disposition; enduring injury but not inflicting it; bearing all mankind but not goading all of them against anyone; helping others obtain righteousness; and aiding the distressed. They guide the lost, teach the ignorant, and alert the heedless. They neither veil themselves nor have others who veil them: all who seek them find them, and all who want them reach them. They do not hide from anyone nor do they refuse a beggar. They receive a guest hospitably and put the stranger at ease; they reassure the fearful, satiate the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked and help the servant. They neglect no virtue and commit no vice.

Among their attributes: physical efforts in the way of hunger, thirst, nakedness, and the four rigors: white death, which is hunger; red death, which is opposition to passion; black death, which is bearing injury; and green death, which is the wearing of a frock with patches one over another.<sup>2</sup>

Among their attributes: renouncing both worlds from their hearts, and preferring their brethren among God's creatures to what they possess; relying upon God Most High in all their affairs; being content with everything that happens to them which the ego detests; and bearing patiently sufferings and separation from one's homeland. They dissociate themselves from creatures without believing that there is evil in

them, but rather out of preference for the Creator over creatures. They sever relationships, surmount obstacles, and strive in fulfilling the needs of people after emptying themselves; for whosoever strives to do that before emptying himself is actually seeking leadership and a good reputation.

Among their virtues: being satisfied, which means that their souls should be content with what has been provided in the way of sustenance without expecting more; and not shaving a hair or cutting it, nor clipping a nail, nor taking off a garment to be given to someone else unless they are ritually pure, for it is their intention that nothing leave them without their being in a state of ritual purity. The angels say, "We left them while they were praying."<sup>3</sup>

Among their attributes: supplication to God Most High by way of fulfilling the duty of servanthood ('ubūdiyyah); spiritual poverty, submissiveness, humility, obedience, modesty toward God Most High in order that the Divine Names which correspond to these qualities may be manifested. Indeed, only he who is characterized by these attributes can know the mystery of these Names, for they are the spirit of servanthood.

Among their states: examining their defects and occupying themselves with their own souls, while being blind to the faults of people. They believe in nought but the good in everyone, and therefore habituate their tongues to the good. They abstain from being curious, walk quickly, keep silent except with regard to the good, command good deeds, and prohibit kings who are feared and in whom others place their hope from committing evil deeds. They are at peace with all of creation and pray for Muslims secretly. They serve their fellow seekers and have

compassion and mercy for all God's servants, whether human or nonhuman living things.

It is related that in Bukhāra there was a governor who was one of the most tyrannical of men. One day he was riding and saw a mangy dog. That day was extremely cold, so he said to one of his men, "Pick up that dog!" It was taken to his house, and he was kind and friendly to it. When night came, a voice called out in his sleep, "You were a dog, so we gave you to a dog."

Among their states: they spread about the good qualities of people and hide their faults, except for innovators: everyone is under obligation to make known their state so that people can be on their guard against them.

Among their states: looking with the eye of appreciation, not with the eye of contempt. They do not see themselves as better than anyone else, nor do they see themselves as having a superiority or right over anyone; rather, it is creatures who have rights over them. They do not lend anything to anyone, but if someone who is in need requests something of them, they give it to him; nor do they tell themselves that they will take anything from him; but if it is returned, they persuade him gently to keep it. If he refuses, they take it from him and give it to some other needy person, since it can never be added to their property; for verily, once they abandon anything, they do not go back to reclaim it. If they drop something in the street, whether clothing or money--even if it be one thousand dinars--which they might have left behind as they walked on, they neither search for it nor return to search for it nor ask about it. If on account of that loss, their minds are distraught, then they have a weakness, and the world has a share in their hearts. So let them take steps to remove this weakness. If

someone returns what was lost to them without being asked, then if they wish, they may keep it or if they wish, they may give it away.

Among their attributes: giving preference to the poor over the rich and to those concerned with the Hereafter over those concerned with the here and now. It is not one of their conditions that they not have wealth; rather, among them are those who have wealth and those who have nothing.

Among their attributes: taking pleasure in acts of obedience both during spiritual retreat and in public; keeping an eye on their moments with God Most High; preserving their thoughts fixed on God Most High when receiving inspirations from time to time; being content with God Most High in all states; and praising God for every state.

Whosoever breaks a habit within himself of the type that everyone else amongst mankind continues to have, then God Most High, in return for that, will similarly break a habit for him, and this is called a miracle (karāmah) by the masses. As for the elite, to them this miracle is the Divine Providence which bestows on them success and strength, so that they can break their habits themselves.

PART TWO  
OF THE BOOK

ON EXPLAINING INVOCATIONS

HEREIN ARE SECTIONS AND A CONCLUSION WHICH ARE  
PART OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PRINCIPLES

Section [1]

Discussions on the Phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh

First Discussion

Grammarians have said: When lā ("no") is joined to an indefinite noun, it signifies a general negation. If you say, "There is no man in the house," you negate both the few men and the many. Therefore, it is not correct to say after that, "but one or two men."

Second Discussion

A number of grammarians claim that the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh ("There is no divinity but God") has elision and ellipsis, the meaning being, "We have no divinity but God," or "There is no divinity in existence but God." This calls for reflection, because if the meaning were, "We have no divinity but God," then "There is no divinity but God" would not have the meaning of True Unity. It is conceivable that one may say, "Suppose that we have no divinity but God. Then would you say that there is no divinity but God for all creatures and possibilities?" Accordingly, when God Most High said, "Your God is One God," He said

afterwards, "There is no god save Him, the Compassionate, the Merciful."<sup>1</sup>

There remains for a proponent to say, "Suppose that our God is One. Would you then say that the God of eil is One?" He removed that possibility by His saying, 'There is no divinity but Him'; otherwise it would be pure repetition.

There is a second meaning to "There is no divinity in existence but God" and it also has to be considered, because there is no need for this ellipsis. If we assess it aright, it negates the existence of the Divinity. Even if we did not assess it aright and simply took the literal meaning of the phrase, it would negate the essence of the Divinity. It is known that the negation of the essence is more powerful in affirming Unity than the negation of existence.

If it be said: The negation of essence is absurd, for the statement, "black is not black" is a judgment to the effect that black has been transformed into its opposite. Now, that something should become its opposite is preposterous. While if we say, "Black is nonexistent," then that is reasonable.

The response: We do not concede that the negation of the essence is absurd. When you say, "Black is nonexistent," you have negated existence, but existence insofar as it is an essence. When you negate absolute essence, you negate the essence which is called existence. Hence, negation of the essence is intelligible; therefore, it is possible to interpret the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh in a literal sense. When you say, "Black is nonexistent," you negate the essence, but you do not negate existence. You only negate the essence whose attribute is existence. So, is this essence whose attribute is existence something



that is different from essence and existence or not? If it differs from the two, then that difference is an essence. Hence our statement, "Black is nonexistent," is a negation of that essence which is called "attribution" (mawṣūfiyyah); and at that point we return to the previous discussion. But if we say that the essence whose attribute is existence is not something that is different from essence and existence, then applying the negation to both is not possible. When that is impossible, negation remains directed either at essence or at existence. At that point, we reach our aim of determining whether it is possible to negate the essence. Thus, our statement, Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, without ellipsis, is correct.

### Third Discussion

Our saying "Allāhu" in the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh<sup>2</sup> is in the nominative case because it is an appositive standing for ilā with its noun. For if you say, "No man came to me except Zayd," your saying "except Zayd" is in the nominative case in apposition, because in apposition one rejects the first part of the phrase and accepts the second. So the meaning becomes, "None but Zayd came to me." This is logical, because it conveys the negation of the coming of all except Zayd. In your saying, "The people came to me except Zayd," apposition is not possible, because the meaning then is, "They came to me except Zayd," which necessitates that everyone but Zayd came to him; and this is absurd.

### Fourth Discussion

Grammarians agree that the place of illa in this expression is the

same as ghayr, so the implied meaning is Lā ilāha ghayru 'llāh ("There is no divinity other than God"). A poet once said,

And every brother quits his brother  
By your father's life, except (illa)  
the two stars (al-farqadān)<sup>3</sup>

The meaning: Every brother other than (ghayr) the two stars quits his brother. God Most High has said, "If there were, in the heavens and the earth, other gods besides (illa) God," meaning: If there had been deities other than (ghayr) God--"then verily, there would have been confusion in both!"<sup>4</sup>

For if we interpret illa as exception, then Lā ilāha illa 'llāh would not be pure Unity, because the meaning would become, "There are no divinities from which God is to be excluded." It would be the negation of deities from which God has been excluded and indeed this is affirmed by those who hold to the actual meaning of the statement, and that is disbelief. Accordingly, it has been proved that if the expression illa be construed as exception, then the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh would not be pure Unity. The sagas agree that it conveys the meaning of pure Unity; so it is necessary to ascribe to illa (except) the meaning of ghayr (other than), so that the meaning of the phrase would be Lā ilāha ghayru 'llāh ("There is no divinity other than God").

### Fifth Discussion

A number of theologians have said, "The exception from a negation is not an affirmation." They advance as an argument that exception (istithnā)<sup>5</sup> is derived from the saying, "I diverted something from its direction,"<sup>5</sup> which means, "I kept it away from it." When you say, "There is no scholar (lā 'ālim)," then this is both a judgment of

nonexistence as well as the negation of nonexistence. Then when you say immediately afterwards, "except Zayd," this exception might conceivably go back to the judgment of nonexistence; and upon the elimination of the judgment of nonexistence, the exception remains undiscussed and unevaluated as either negative or affirmative; so no certainty results.

However, if the influence of the exception is in its removal of nonexistence and in precluding it, then certainty results necessarily. This is so because, when nonexistence is removed, existence results necessarily, for there is no intermediary between the two opposites. When that is ascertained, then referring the exception to the judgment of nonexistence is more appropriate than referring it to nonexistence itself, because the words were devised with reference to conceptual judgments, not to external existent things. Hence, ascribing that exception to the judgment of nonexistence is more appropriate than ascribing it to nonexistence itself. Moreover, both the nonexistence of something in itself and its essence are not subject to the control of an evaluator; rather, it is the evaluator who judges of that existence and nonexistence. So, referring the exception to the judgment is better than referring it to the thing adjudged to be nonexistent.

The second proof in elucidating that the exception from a negation is not an affirmation is that many illustrations have come down through the Prophetic traditions and customs regarding the exception from negation, even though they do not necessarily lead to certainty, as in the words of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!), "There is no marriage except through a legal guardian" and his other words, "There is no prayer save through ritual purity." It is customarily said, "There is no power except through wealth and no wealth except through men."

The meaning of each of these statements is conditional. Even though other illustrations have come down to us indicating that the exception from the negation is affirmation, we say: a figurative expression must be in one of the two parts of the sentence. Otherwise, we say that when it is not decreed that whatever is excluded from the negation is affirmation, the meaning might be just that, whatever the wording indicates. If we say: If it be decreed that whatever is excluded from the negation is affirmation, and such is not the case, then we must require the nonobservance of whatever the wording indicates. It is known that the former is more appropriate because the affirmation of an additional matter through additional proof is not a contradiction to the general meaning; but abandoning whatever the wording might be is a contradiction to the general meaning. Thus, the exception from the negation is not affirmation.

Accordingly, our statement, Lā ilāha illa 'llāh ("There is no divinity but God") is a declaration negating the remaining deities. It is not a recognition of the existence of God Most High, which would not suffice in terms of sound faith. Also, it has been established that illā ("except") has the meaning of ghayr ("other than"), so that our phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh means Lā ilāha ghayru 'llāh ("There is no divinity other than God"). Then the meaning becomes: The negation of a divinity differing from God Most High. It does not follow that the negation of that which differs from something is an affirmation of the former; for ambiguity would then return.

The response: The affirmation of the Divinity was agreed upon among the intelligent, for God Most High says, "And if thou ask them who created them, they will surely say God,"<sup>6</sup> except that they used to

affirm associates and peers alongside Him. Thus, what was intended by Lā ilāhe illa' illāh was the negation of associates and peers, for the affirmation of Divinity is one of the necessary attributes of intelligence. We have admitted that the phrase Lā ilāha ille' illāh indicates the negation of the other deities and the affirmation of the divinity of God Most High, except that this comes about through the regulation of the Sacred Law and through the grasp of a principle of language.

#### Sixth Discussion

It may be said, "There is no man in the house," or "There is no man except in the house." As for the first example, it necessarily negates all men totally; for when lā ("no") is joined to an indefinite noun, it conveys the meaning of general negation. It is not, therefore, correct to say thereafter, "but one or two men;" for it is the negation of the essence, and negation of the essence necessitates the negation of all its constituent parts. As to our statement, "There is no man except in the house," it is the opposite of "There is no man in the house." But our statement, "There is no man except in the house," conveys the certainty of one man. When we say, "There is no man in the house," it necessarily conveys the meaning of general negation, and thus mutual contradiction between the two statements is confirmed. It is evident that "There is no man in the house" is more forceful in indicating general negation than is the phrase "There is no man," in spite of the fact that each one of the two examples conveys the meaning of general negation. Inasmuch as the accusative construction is stronger in indicating generality, scholars agree upon it in the statement, Lā ilāhe illa' illāh.<sup>7</sup>

#### Seventh Discussion

It is said that the concept of affirmation has priority over the concept of negation because of the possibility of conceiving affirmation, even though the idea of negation and nonexistence does not occur to the mind of one. The concept of nonexistence and negation is impossible before the concept of affirmation, because nonexistence is unintelligible except in relation to a specified thing. Since the concept of affirmation precedes the concept of negation, why, then, should negation, which is subordinate, be made antecedent?

The answer is that there are many reasons for its precedence. The first: the negation of divinity from other than God Most High and then its affirmation in regard to Him are much more emphatic than affirming it of Him without negating it in other-than-Him. Our statement, "There is no scholar in the town other than Zeyd" is much more praiseworthy than "Zeyd is the town scholar."

The second: every man has one heart and one heart cannot be occupied with two things at the same time. When it is occupied with one of the two things, it is excluded from the other thing, and this to the extent of its occupation with the first. Thus, it behooves the one who says Lā ilāhe ille' illāh that he intend by Lā ilāha the expulsion of what is other-than-God from his heart. When the heart is empty of what is other-than-God, and when the authority of God is present therein, its light shines with a complete radiance, and His possession of it is perfect.

The third: negation is analogous to ritual purity and affirmation is analogous to prayer. Just as ritual purity precedes prayer, so too does Lā ilāha precede illa' illāh. Negation is analogous to seeking

refuge in God prior to reading the Qur'ān.<sup>8</sup> Just as cleaning a house of dirt precedes the arrival of a king therein, likewise is it the case here. And in this regard, realized sages have said: The first half of this expression is cleansing the heart, and the second is the advent of illumination through the presence of al-Jabbār ("the Compeller"); the first half is separation and the second is union; the first half points to His Words (may He be exalted!), "Therefore flee unto God,"<sup>9</sup> and the second to His Words, "Say Allāh. Then leave them. . ."<sup>10</sup>

#### Eighth Discussion

Someone might say: Whosoever knows that the world has a Wise, Powerful Creator, described by passive and dynamic divine Attributes, knows God with complete gnosis. His knowledge of the nonexistence of a second divinity does not increase his knowledge of the reality of the Divinity and His Attributes, because the nonexistence of a second deity is not equivalent to the existence of the first Divinity nor to any of His Attributes. Knowledge of the Essence of the Divinity and His Attributes does not suffice for the realization of salvation; rather, as long as the nonexistence of a second divinity is not known, valuable knowledge about salvation is not attained.

If you ask: Why is gnosis of the Essence of God Most High and His Attributes not sufficient for the realization of salvation, while the knowledge of the nonexistence of a second deity is important for the realization of salvation? The answer is this: Assuming there were two divinities (may God be exalted!), the servant would not know if he were the servant of this one or the servant of that one or of both together. It is possible that he may be the worshipper of one who is not his Creator. But when he knows that Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, then he is

absolutely certain of the fact that he is the worshipper of his Lord and Creator. Consequently, salvation cannot be attained save through Unity.

I say: For me, the supposition of the existence of two deities is rationally impossible, because the Divinity is the One Who has the Attributes of Majesty and Beauty, both dynamically and passively. Then who is there other-than-He? In the "other-than-He," those Attributes are acquired from Him. Thus, the Divinity is naught but One, and He is Allāh, as is evidenced through His Words (may He be exalted!). "If there were, in the heavens and the earth, gods besides God, then verily, there would have been confusion in both!"<sup>11</sup>

#### Ninth Discussion

On saying this phrase under different conditions: The most elementary of them is uttering it, which saves the life of the person who says it and protects his wealth. The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said,

I have been commanded to fight people until they say, Lā ilāha illa 'llāh. When they say it, they safeguard their lives and property from me, except as is rightfully due; and their reckoning is with God.<sup>12</sup>

Both the sincere ones and the hypocrites share therein; thus all who attach themselves to this phrase obtain its blessings and gain a share of its benefits. Whosoever asks for the world through it gains safety and peace therein; and whosoever asks for the Hereafter has already combined two shares and has gained happiness in both worlds. And yet confessing with the tongue is but one degree!

The second condition<sup>13</sup> is to add to the saying belief in the heart in keeping with traditional conformism; for the conformist is not a

scholar or gnostic. Rather, there is a difference of opinion: is he a Muslim or not? Belief in the heart has several degrees according to the strength of belief and to the greater or smaller number of its articles of faith.

The third condition is to add to belief in the heart knowledge of the convincing arguments that strengthen that belief. Mankind differs therein with a difference that is difficult to ascertain.

The fourth condition is to back up his belief with decisive proofs, unless he is not from amongst the people of contemplation, unveiling, and revelation.

The fifth condition is to be from amongst the people of contemplation, unveiling, and revelation. Their relationship to the people with decisive proofs is like the relationship of the letter to the generality of mankind.

Know that the science of unveiling has no end to it, for it consists in the journey of the intellect in the stations of Majesty, Beauty, Sublimeness, Grandeur, and Holiness.

Note: He to whom the mysteries of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh are revealed draws near to God, and his worship of God becomes sincere. He does not turn to anyone but to Him, nor does he have hope in or fear other than Him, nor does he see harm or benefit except as coming from Him. He abandons whosoever is not He and rids himself of inward and outward associationism (shirk).

## Section [2]

### On Establishing Proof That He Is One Without Associate, Both Intellectually and Traditionally

As for intellectually, there are these aspects: First, the existence of two deities is absurd, since if we suppose the existence of the two, then each one would be master over all possibilities. If we suppose that one of the two wanted Zayd to move and the other wanted him to be still, either both desires would take place, which is absurd, due to the impossibility of combining two opposites, or one of the two would not occur, which is absurd, because preventing the occurrence of the desire of each one of them means achieving the aim of the other. Nor is the existence of one's desire to be prevented except when the existence of the desire of the other occurs or vice versa. Even if they both refrained together, they would both co-exist together, and that is impossible for two reasons:

The first: Inasmuch as each one of the two is master over that which is endless, it is impossible that one of them be more powerful than the other; rather, they are equal in power, so it is impossible that the desire of one of them become more worthy of occurrence than that of the other. This would require the predominance of one of the two equals without any predominating element; and this is absurd.

The second: If the desire of one of the two takes place without the other, then the one whose desire occurred is powerful, and the one whose desire did not occur is weak, and he is not the Deity of Creation.

If it be said: We do not accept that the contradiction of wills is a sound argument for two reasons: One of them is that since each one of them must be a knower of all things knowable, each of them is bound to

know that one of the two opposites will take place while the other will not. Now the occurrence of that which a deity knows cannot take place is impossible. The knower of that which is impossible of occurrence does not, accordingly, desire it. Thus, each one wants naught but the occurrence of one thing.

The second reason is that since each one of them must be wise, each knows what is good and not good, and both agree in willing the good; thus, contradiction is impossible. We accept the validity of the argument, but we say it is merely conceivable, not real; so it is not necessarily absurd.

The answer: If knowledge of the good were the cause for willing it, then the Deity would be the result of His deeds, not the Creator of them out of free will. The doctrine on Unicity is subordinate to the doctrine that affirms the Powerful, the Free of will.

The second proof: If we assume that there are two deities, each of them would have power over all possibilities, which would lead to the occurrence of two possibilities emanating from two independent powers; and that is impossible. Hence, the existence of two deities is impossible.

The proof of inseparableness is that if each one of them were subject to the other, and they agreed on a possible creation, then the power of one of them would not be worthier to create than the other, because each one is independent in creating and is willing to do it, and there is no predominance in either one of them. We only said that the occurrence of two possibilities emanating from two independent powers is impossible, because that deed is in need of both and yet is in no need

of both. Thus, it would need and yet not need both of them; and that is a union of opposites.

The third proof: If we assume that there are two deities, then either it is true that they will disagree, so that one of them must be weak; or it is not true, and this leads to the weakness of one of them also, for each one of them must be weak in regard to the opposition manifested by his counterpart. Thus, the matter goes back to the point already made, that each one of them is weak. Now, the weak cannot be a deity.

When you know that, you know that all created beings and things that are in the higher and lower world are proofs of the Unicity of God Most High. Indeed, if one of the two deities had wanted it to be summer and the other winter, or if one of them had wanted this person to be well and the other wanted him sick, then what we had previously established would crop up again. I would say in verse:

Heaven and earth and the highest of mountains,  
as likewise these oceans, witness to Him.  
And all of mankind are unable to create  
the least insect, which is a worshipper of Him.  
And in everything there is a sign that points  
to His being One.

The fourth proof: If we assume two existents as having necessary self-existence, then each would have to be a partner to the other in existence and at variance with him in himself. Now, that through which the partnership comes about is other than that through which the variance occurs. Each one is a compound made up of existence, which the other shares with him, and of dissimilarity through which he is at variance with the other. Each compound needs every one of its parts, but its parts are other-than-it. Thus, every compound is in need, and

everything needful is a possibility. Maintaining that Necessary Existence is more than one is therefore absurd.

The fifth proof: If we assume two deities, each of them having necessary self-existence, then each one must be distinguished by a certain characteristic; otherwise, multiplicity could not occur. So, wherein lies the distinction? Either it is an attribute of perfection or it is not. If it were an attribute of perfection, then the one devoid of it would be devoid of an attribute of perfection, and it would be imperfect. Now, the imperfect cannot be a god. If it is not an attribute of perfection, then it is an attribute of imperfection; and the imperfect cannot be a god.

The sixth proof: Wherein lies the distinction? Either it is of considerable importance in the ascertainment of his divinity, or it is not. If it were of considerable importance, then the one devoid of it would not be a god. But if it were not of considerable importance, then being distinguished by it is not necessary. Hence, he is in need of a distinguishing trait; he who is in need is one who lacks and is not a deity.

The seventh proof: If we assume two deities, then inevitably the servant would be able to distinguish between them. That distinction, in our minds, would come about through place, time, or power; and such restrictions for a god are impossible.

The eighth proof: If we assume two deities, then one of them is either sufficient for directing and creating the world, or he is not. If he were sufficient, then the other would not be needed, and that is an imperfection; or if he were not sufficient, then he is imperfect, and the imperfect cannot be a god.

The ninth proof: Intelligence makes the judgment that an act is in need of an agent, and a single agent is enough. With regard to what is greater than one, we say that the need for two is no more valid than for three, and the need for three is no more valid than for four, and so on endlessly. Thus, declaring that there are two deities is absurd.

The tenth proof: One of the two deities either has the ability to distinguish himself and delimit himself, or he does not. First: This is absurd, because the proof for affirming a creator is based on the contingency of created beings and their possibility; and nothing therein indicates delimitation. Second: This is false because it leads to positing weakness in the deity.

The eleventh proof: One of the two deities either has the ability to hide some of his deeds, so that the veiled deity must be ignorant, or he is unable to, and thus he must be weak.

The twelfth proof: The totality of both their powers is stronger than the power of each one individually; hence, the power of each one is limited, so each one is weak.

The thirteenth proof: Number is imperfect because of its need for the number "one"; and likewise "the one" which is created out of the same species and type as number is imperfect, because the total sum of quantity is greater than it; and the imperfect cannot be a god.<sup>6</sup>

The fourteenth proof: If we assume two deities, and we assume that a nonexistent can exist, then if one of the two deities cannot create, they are both weak; but if one of them can, then the weak one is not a god. If they both can together and if they create through mutual cooperation, then each one is in need of the other; so each one is weak.

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<sup>6</sup> The author is speaking of "one" in a quantitative sense in contrast to the qualitative Oneness of God.

If each one can create independently, then when one of them does create, either the second one has the power to do so--and that is impossible, because the creation of what exists is absurd--or else he does not have the power, in which case the first has eliminated the second's power and weakened him. So he is vanquished and is not a god.

If it be said: As for the first deity, when his creation comes into being, his power ceases, so he must of necessity have made himself weak. We answer: When his creation comes into being, his power is exhausted; but exhaustion of power is not weakness. As to his partner, his power has not been exhausted; rather it has vanished because of the power of the first; and that is a weakening.

The fifteenth proof: We say that if we assume two deities, then either each one of them has the ability to produce movement in a particular body in place of repose, and vice versa, or each does not. If one does not, he is weak; and if he does, then when he produces movement in it, it would be impossible for the second one to produce repose in it. So the latter is weak and not a god.

The sixteenth proof: If we assume two deities that were knowers of all things knowable, then the knowledge of each one of them would be dependent upon the very thing known by the other. Hence, similarity would inevitably result; the receiver of one of two similar things would then be the same as the receiver of the other. The distinction of beings possessed of such-and-such a knowledge, in spite of their having the possibility of being characterized by another type of knowledge in place of the former, would then be conceivable. That requires a restriction for each one of the two deities as regards his own knowledge and power. So each one is imperfect, needing a deity, which is absurd.

The seventeenth proof: Partnership in sovereignty is a flaw in any textual proof inasmuch as the quality of being unique, the affirmation of Unity, and independence of rule are attributes of perfection. Kings loathe partnership in this lower kingdom. The greater the kingdom, the stronger is the aversion to partnership; so what must be your thought about the Kingdom (mulk) of God Most High and His Realm (Malakūt)? Thus, when one of the two deities has power to take a kingdom for himself, the other is weak.

The eighteenth proof: If we assume two deities (may God be exalted!), then either each one is in need of the other or is not in need, or else one of them is in need and the other is not. If the first part of the condition applies, then both are needful; if the second part applies, then each one is in no need of the other, so the other is imperfect. Do you not see that when a country has a chief, but the people do what is best for that country without either consulting or taking the chief into consideration, that this is the extreme of baseness and meanness? The deity that is self-sufficient cannot be dispensed with; and if one of them needs the other without the opposite being true, then the one in need is imperfect, and the independent one is the deity. Some of these viewpoints are decisive and some are convincing.

As for the traditional proofs, the first ones are His Words:

"Your God is One God; there is no deity save Him."<sup>14</sup>

"Say: He is God, the One!"<sup>15</sup>

"God says, 'Do not take two gods, for He is only One God.'"<sup>16</sup>

The second is His words (may He be exalted!), "He is the First and the Last."<sup>17</sup>



The First is the One without antecedent, so that if someone were to say, "The first slave I buy will be freed," and then buys firstly two slaves; he will free neither of them because the first must be a single person. Even if he were to buy one after that, he would not free him either, because the first must be prior to the others. For when God Most High described Himself as being First, it is incumbent that He be unique and prior to all else; hence, this requires that He not have a partner.

The third is His words (may He be exalted!), "And with Him are the keys of the Invisible. None but He knoweth them."<sup>18</sup> If He had a partner, surely the partner would know them, but the text decrees that no one know them except Him.

The fourth is the phrase Lā ilāhē illa 'llāh; it is mentioned in thirty-seven passages in the Qur'ān.

The fifth is His words (may He be exalted!), "Everything will perish save His countenance."<sup>19</sup> It was decreed that what is other-than-Him should perish. Whatsoever is nonexistent, and then comes into being, cannot be eternal; and that which has been ascertained as eternity cannot possibly be nonexistence. What is not eternal is not a god.

The sixth is His words (may He be exalted!), "If God touch thee with affliction, there is none that can relieve therefrom save Him."<sup>20</sup> The affirmation that there is a partner alongside God is false. The partner is either higher or lower. The higher are the stars, the sun, and the moon; but God has nullified these by the argument of Abraham, when he said, "I love not things that set."<sup>21</sup> God has nullified the argument of those who allege that the partner is either light or darkness by His words, "He created the darkness and the light."<sup>22</sup> God Most High has nullified whosoever says that there are two deities by His

words, "If there were, in the heavens and the earth, gods beside God, then verily there would have been confusion in both!"<sup>23</sup> and His words, "then had they sought a way against the Lord of the Throne,"<sup>24</sup> and "and some of them would assuredly have overcome others."<sup>25</sup>

The lower partner is said to be the Messiah, but God nullified it by His words, "The Messiah will never scorn to be a servant unto God."<sup>26</sup> It is also said to be an idol, but God nullified this by His words, "Is he who creeth like he who creeth not?"<sup>27</sup>

The seventh: God (may He be glorified!) has mentioned three proofs on the validity of Oneness:

[1] "If there were, in the heavens and the earth, gods beside God, then verily there would have been confusion in both!"<sup>28</sup>

[2] "Some of them would assuredly have overcome others."<sup>29</sup>

[3] "Then had they sought a way against the Lord of the Throne."<sup>30</sup> Glory be to God, Lord of the Throne.

That is a warning to the effect that being occupied with the glorification of God is of benefit only after establishing proof that His existence is incomparable. He said, "Glory be to God, the Lord of the Throne, from all that they ascribe unto Him."<sup>31</sup> He did not say, "Glory be to God from all that they ascribe unto Him," as a warning: how is it possible for the intelligent person to make the inanimate, which neither lives nor discerns, a partner in divinity with the Creator of the Supreme Throne and the Originator of the heavens and the earth?

Conclusion: Know that faith is composed of the gnosis occurring in the heart, which is the foundation, for God Most High has said, "Know that there is no divinity but God";<sup>32</sup> and of confessing Oneness with the tongue, for God Most High has said, "Say: He is God, the One!"<sup>33</sup>

Indeed, "say" is an imperative for the one under obligation to declare with his tongue whatsoever denotes Unicity. The words of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) confirm that: "I have been commanded to fight people until they say, Lā ilāha illa 'llāh."<sup>34</sup>

Pronunciation with the tongue is an obligation, because faith has precepts which pertain to the inward, and these are the precepts of the Hereafter; and the inward is subordinate to the knowledge which is hidden from Creation. It also has precepts which pertain to the outward, which are the rules of this world. Determining them is not possible for us except after we have come to know of the submission of the one under obligation to observe the religious precepts, and this we know only through words. Knowledge is a basic support with regard to God Most High, while speech is a canonical support with regard to mankind. That is what His words allude to in the verse: "We do not idolatresses till they believe."<sup>35</sup>

The Prophet (on him be blessings and peace!) said, "Whoever says Lā ilāha illa 'llāh sincerely with his heart will enter Paradise." Ad-Daqqāq said, "Whoever says it sincerely in his speech enters Paradise as he is." God Most High has said, "But for him who feareth the standing before his Lord, there are two Paradises,"<sup>36</sup> the Paradise of the present moment, which is the Paradise of gnosis, and the Paradise in the end, which is the Paradise of the Hereafter.

### Section [3]

It was related on the authority of Muhammad al-Hakim at-Tirmidhi that Mu'adh ibn Jabal (may God be pleased with him!) said, "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, 'Not a soul dies witnessing that there is no divinity save God and that I am the Messenger of God--with that stemming from a believer's heart--but God pardons it.'"

The Shaykh<sup>37</sup> said,

This is because this testimony of faith is attested to at death when passions have died out in him, his rebellious soul has softened, his desire has left, he has cast himself before the power of the Lord of the Worlds, and both the inward and the outward have become alike for him. He meets God sincerely by that testimony of faith, and He pardons him through that true testimony of faith, the exterior of which corresponds to the interior. As for the one who says it while still healthy, that is a confused statement, because he bears witness to this testimony while his heart is filled with passions and his soul is reckless and arrogant. This, then, is the difference between remembering the testimony of faith in a state of health and remembering it at the end of one's life.

The Imam Fakhru'd-Din elaborated on it by saying,

Indeed, the heart of man is tempted by his world, fettered by the power of passions, intoxicated away from the Hereafter, and perplexed with regard to God Most High. Certitude will never take place in him, because his heart is filled with the tendency towards what is other-than-God Most High; so the tendency towards God Most High does not take place.

When certitude about God Most High does occur in the heart, the situation is the reverse of what was said, for certitude is called certitude (yaqīn) because of its settling (istiqrār) in the heart; and it is the Light. It is said, "The water in the hole was clear (tayyaqqana)," when it settles (istaqarra) therein. So when light settles in, it is lasting;

and when it lasts, the soul becomes discerning. The heart becomes tranquil through the Majesty of God; then it abstains from what is other-than-God. So, it stands weak and is compelled to cry out to God for help. Then He who responds to the necessitous when they cry out to Him, responds to it. That radiant light saddles into the heart and the darkness of preoccupation with what is other-than-God is extinguished therewith. Then the reality of the Realm (al-Malakūt) becomes visible to it, and that is what Harithah meant when he said to the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!): "It is as if I see the Throne of my Lord distinctly." And the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "The light of God Most High is faith in one's heart."

Tradition mentions that Idrīs (on him be peace!) and Moses and Muḥammad (the blessings of God be upon them all!), each of them in his own time practiced this supplication constantly: "O light of everything, Thou art He whose Light dispels the darkness." The words of the Prophet (on him be blessings and peace!) substantiate that:

For whosoever says, "There is no divinity but God alone; He has no associates; to Him belong dominion and praise; He gives life and causes death; and He has power over everything," sincerely in his spirit, believing in his heart and with his tongue, the heavens will rend asunder so that the Lord sees the one speaking among the people of the world.

Zayd ibn Arqam transmitted the following:

The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "Whosoever says Lā ilāha illa 'llāh sincerely enters Paradise." He was asked, "O Messenger of God, how can one say the words sincerely?" He answered, "By keeping away from things forbidden." The Prophet (on him be blessings and peace!) said, "Be sincere! Even a little will suffice you!"

Zayd ibn Arqam said,

The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "Verily, God has enjoined upon me that no one from my community should come to me with Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, without mixing anything in the words, but that Paradise is incumbent upon him." They said, "O Messenger of God, and what is that which one might mix with the words?" He answered,

"Desire for this world, amassing wealth for its sake, and defending it; he professes the teachings of the Prophets while behaving like tyrants."

In short, certitude is inevitable upon uttering this phrase, so that it become beneficial. But certitude does not occur through it except through the death of passions; and the death of passions is not reached except through one of two ways: one, that he discipline himself until his passions die while he is alive; and two, that his passions die at his death. Then his hopes and fear of his Lord become great, and his view of the world as a whole is severed by force. When he utters these words in that state, he merits forgiveness. For this reason, the pious ancestors used to prefer teaching them to the dying person. The Prophet (on him be blessings and peace!) said, "Teach your dying Lā ilāha illa 'llāh."<sup>38</sup>

For the human being near death, his passions are extinguished, the light of certitude comes to him; then this sacred phrase on his part becomes acceptable. As to the first category, which is the one who disciplines his soul, God opens for him a small window to the invisible world. Then the terrors of the Lord of Majesty master him, so he utters the phrase from a pure heart, which makes him more deserving of forgiveness.

#### Section [4]

Since this sacred phrase is the most excellent invocation, both the saint and the enemy of God seek refuge therein at the moment of tribulation. Thus Pharaoh, when near drowning, "He exclaimed: I believe that there is no god save Him in whom the Children of Israel believe."<sup>39</sup>

That is, there is no deity who has the ability to make fire a comfort as was the case with the Friend (al-Khalīl),<sup>40</sup> or make water a torture as was the case with Pharaoh: "save Him in whom the Children of Israel believe."<sup>41</sup>

And to Jonah (on him be peace!), God Most High said, "He cried out in the darkness that there is no god but Thou."<sup>42</sup> That is, indeed it is Thou who art able to keep a human being alive in the stomach of a whale, and no one other than Thou canst do that. So He accepted Jonah's appeal but did not accept Pharaoh's, because Jonah had had prior knowledge. God Most High has said, "And be not like him of the fish, who cried out in despair;"<sup>43</sup> and He Most High has said, "And had he not been one of those who glorify, he would have tarried in its belly till the day when they are raised."<sup>44</sup>

This is a warning that whosoever is mindful of God in seclusion is mindful of Him in public. However, Jonah (on him be peace!) remembered this phrase with presence of mind, contemplation, and contrition, then said, "There is no god but Thou;"<sup>45</sup> while Pharaoh said it with absent-mindedness. "There is no god save Him in whom the Children of Israel believe."<sup>46</sup> With regard to Pharaoh, polytheism preceded him, so he did not mention the phrase out of veneration but rather to seek deliverance from drowning, due to His words (may He be exalted!), "Till, when the drowning overtook him, he exclaimed: I believe that there is no god save Him in whom the Children of Israel believe."<sup>47</sup>

God Most High commands you to perform many acts of obedience, but it is impossible that he fulfill your wish in any one of them; and He commands you to say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, but He fulfills your wish therein, for he said, "God is witness that there is no god save Him."<sup>48</sup>

The command to repeat this phrase in the verse is a command to repeat it throughout your life.

It is related that Joseph (on him be peace!) desired to have a minister. Gabriel (on him be peace!) said, "Verily, God commands you to take so-and-so as your minister." Joseph (on him be peace!) then looked at him, and the man was extremely ugly; so he asked Gabriel the reason for choosing this man. He answered, "Indeed, he has witnessed for you; for it is he who has testified, 'If his shirt is torn from the front.'"<sup>49</sup>

The allusion therein is that the one who bore witness to a fellow creature found his ministry in this world; and thus how can the one who bears witness to the Oneness of God here and now not find His mercy in the Hereafter? A ḥadīth states: "Verily, God has angels who guarantee the protection of a leader (imām); now he whose protection is in agreement with the guarantee of the angels is forgiven all his former sins." He whose protection corresponds to the guarantee of the angels one time is forgiven. He whose testimony of faith corresponds to the Unity of God Most High and witnesses to God one thousand times is even more deserving of being forgiven.

It was reported that al-Ḥajjāj ordered the death of a man who said, "Do not kill me until you take my hand and walk with me." So he acceded to his wishes. Then the man said, "By the sacredness of my companionship with you this hour, do not kill me." Thus, he pardoned him. Companionship with God Most High happens to the believer during the testimony of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; therefore, forgiveness of him is to be expected.

The phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh ascends to God by itself, while other forms of obedience ascend by way of the angels. God Most High has

said, "Unto Him good works ascend, and the pious deed doth He exalt."<sup>50</sup> Some have said that the pious deed ascends by way of the angels. All acts of obedience disappear on the Day of Judgment, but the utterance of the formulas Lā ilāha illa 'llāh and al-hamdu lillāh ("Praise be to God") do not.

God Most High has said, transmitting the words of those in Paradise, "And they say: Praise be to God Who hath put grief away from us";<sup>51</sup> and "They say: Praise be to God Who hath fulfilled His promise unto us";<sup>52</sup> "Their prayer therein will be: Glory be to Thee, O God! and their greeting therein will be: Peace."<sup>53</sup>

There is no divinity but He, to whom belongs all praise in this world and the next. It is reported in a tradition that whosoever says "Lā ilāha illa 'llāh" that He Most High will grant him pardon equal to the number of every unbelieving male and female," who ascribe to God an opponent or an antagonist, or an associator. Certainly, he deserves a reward equal to their numbers. It is said, "When it is the end of time, there will be no excellence to anything of the pious deeds like the excellence of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, for the prayers and fasting of people will be vitiated by hypocrisy and reputation, and their almsgiving by what is unlawful. Lā ilāha illa 'llāh is a remembrance, and the believer does not remember God except out of a sincere heart.

## Section [5]

### On the Excellence of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh

It was related that the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "The best remembrance is Lā ilāha illa 'llāh and the best supplication is al-hamdu lillāh."<sup>54</sup>

According to Ibn 'Umar (may God be pleased with both of them!),<sup>55</sup> he said,

For the people of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, there is neither loneliness at death nor at the Resurrection. It is as if I were looking at the people of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh at the moment of the Outcry,<sup>56</sup> shaking off the dirt from their hair and saying, "Praise be to God who hath put grief away from us."<sup>57</sup>

It was related that when al-Ma'mūn departed from Merv in the direction of Iraq, he passed through Nishapur. At his vanguard was 'Alī ibn Mūsā ar-Riqē. A group of sheykh's went to him and said, "We ask you, because of your relation to the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) to tell us a ḥadīth that will be beneficial to us." So he narrated on the authority of his father and his forefathers that the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "God Most High has said, 'Lā ilāha illa 'llāh is My fortress; whosoever enters My fortress is safe from My chastisement."

Ibn 'Abbās related that the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said,

God opens the gates of Paradise and a herald calls out from beneath the Throne, "O Paradise and every bliss that is within you, to whom do you belong?" Paradise and all therein exclaim, "We belong to the people of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh and we long for the people of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh. No one takes

possession of us except the people of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, and we are forbidden to anyone who does not say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh and who does not believe in Lā ilāha illa 'llāh." At this, hellfire with all the chastisement that is therein says, "No one enters me except the one who disavows Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; I seek only those who deny Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; I am forbidden to whosoever says Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; I am not filled except by those who reject Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; and my wrath is only toward the ones who disavow Lā ilāha illa 'llāh."

The Prophet continued,

The forgiveness and mercy of God come and they both say, "Verily, we belong to the people of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; we help those who say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; we love those who say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; and we honor those who say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh." God says, "I have made Paradise lawful for those who say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; I have declared hellfire forbidden to those who say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; I pardon every sin of those who say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; I conceal neither mercy nor forgiveness from those who say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; I have not created Paradise except for the people of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; so, do not mix the people of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh with anything but that which is in conformity with Lā ilāha illa 'llāh."

The Prophet (on him be blessings and peace!) has said,

I have been commanded to fight people until they say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh. When they say it, they safeguard their lives and property from me except as is rightly due; and their reckoning is with God.<sup>58</sup>

#### Section [6]

Gnostics, in commenting on Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, have mentioned various aspects. One of them: Ibn 'Abbās said, "Lā ilāha illa 'llāh

means 'There is no benefactor, no harmer, no exalter, no debaser, no giver, and no prevarter--except God.'"

The second of them: Lā ilāha illa 'llāh means: "Whose grace is hoped for, whose chastisement is feared, whose oppression one can feel safe from, whose sustenance is consumed, whose command is revealed, whose pardon is asked, whose prohibition is not transgressed, and whose favor is not forbidden, if it be not God's?"

Likewise, the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh is a sign of knowledge and an affirmation of Unity with the tongue of praise, testifying of the glorious King. When the servant says Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, it means that there is no deity who has blessings, favor, power, permanence, majesty, splendor, might, praise, displeasure, and contentment except God, who is Lord of the Worlds, Creator of the first ones and the last, and Judge of the Day of Judgment.

Also, the phrase means: "There is no divinity of desire and no divinity of fear except God, remover of grief." Similarly, the expression Lā ilāha illa 'llāh<sup>59</sup> consists of twelve letters, so certainly there are twelve religious obligations, six exoteric and six esoteric. As to the exoteric, they include ritual purity, prayer, almsgiving, fasting, the pilgrimage to Mecca, and holy war. As to the esoteric, they include trust in God, committing things to Him, patience, contentment, detachment, and repentance.

Some have said, "The wisdom in the interrogation of the two angels<sup>60</sup> is that the angels discredited the offspring of Adam with their words, 'Wilt thou place therein one who will do harm therein?'"<sup>61</sup> So God Most High said, "Surely I know that which ye know not."

When the believer dies, God sends two angels to his grave who say to him, "Who is your Lord and what is your religion?" He answers, "My

Lord is God and my religion is Islām." Then God Most High commands the two angels, saying, "Bear witness to what ye two have heard," because the smallest number of witnesses to a deed is two.<sup>62</sup> Then God Most High says to the angels,

Look at My servant from whom I have taken his spirit, wealth, and wife. Others have taken his wealth, his wife is under the protection of someone else, and I have caused him to perish at the hands of another. Then the angels question him in the bowels of the earth, but he does not remember anything except My Unicity and My Transcendence, and this, that they may know that "surely I know that which ye know not."<sup>63</sup>

Also in this regard, God Most High said in the very beginning,<sup>64</sup> "Am I not your Lord? They said: Yee, verily."<sup>65</sup> God testifies about them; for when they came into this world, they bore witness to His Oneness, and the Prophets and believers bore witness about them on that point. When someone dies and is laid in his grave, the two angels question him about this testimony of faith. He bears witness to it in his grave and they hear that testimony. Then when the Day of Judgment comes, Iblīs<sup>66</sup> comes, wanting to take him by saying, "This is one of my people, because he used to follow me in disobedience to God." But God says,

Thou hast no power over him, because I heard his declaration of Unicity from him in the beginning and at the end, and the Messengers heard that from him in the interim, and the angels heard that from him at the end. So how canst he be of thy people and how canst thou have power over him? Take him to Paradise!

## Section [7]

### On the Names of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh

The first: the word tawḥīd ("the affirmation of the Oneness of God") because it indicates the absolute negation of associationism (shirk), and its significance without question is that He Most High said, "Your God is One God."<sup>67</sup> Perhaps it would occur to someone to say, "Suppose that our God is One, but it may be that others have a god who opposes our God." However, God has removed this delusion by His words, "There is no god save Him."<sup>68</sup>

Because our saying, "There is no man in the house" necessitates negation of the essence, and when the essence is negated, all its constituent parts are negated. Then, even if one of the constituent parts of that essence were to exist, certainly that essence would have existed, because each one of its parts includes that essence. If the essence exists, then that contradicts negation of the essence. Thus, it is established that our saying "There is no man in the house" allows of a comprehensive, general negation; and when after that one says, "except Zayd," that conveys a complete meaning of oneness.

This word yields two fruits: the first is that the substance of man was originally created noble and honorable. God Most High has said, "Verily We have honored the children of Adam."<sup>69</sup> Inasmuch as there was honor in the original prototype, then man's being purified is in accordance with his prototype, while his being defiled is in opposition to his original prototype. Then, when we see that man, when associating partners with God, becomes impure, this is due to His words (may He be exalted!), "The associators are unclean."<sup>70</sup> Impurity is in opposition to the prototype, and his being one who affirms the Oneness of God

necessitates purity to begin with, because he is in conformity with the prototype. For he who professes God's Unity is among the elite of God, due to His words (may He be exalted!), "Good women are for good men, and good men for good women."<sup>71</sup>

The second fruit is that associationism is a cause for the ruination of the world: God Most High has said, "Whereby almost the heavens are torn therefrom."<sup>72</sup> If associationism is a cause for the destruction of the world, then the Oneness of God is a cause for the well-being of the world, because two opposites diverge in rule. If the expression of Oneness is a cause for the well-being of the world, then it is all the more so a cause for the well-being of the heart, which is the place of Unicity, and for the well-being of the tongue, which is the place for the invoking of Unicity. That is in keeping with God's forgiveness of the people of Oneness.

The second name: the word (ikhlaṣ ("sincerity")) is so-called because the principle in it involves action of the heart, which is man's knowing with his heart the Unicity of God Most High. It is impossible that this gnosis resulting in the heart should be achieved by men for any other purpose than to obey God, love Him, and worship Him. This gnosis should be sought for the sake of God, not for any other reason whatsoever, unlike the remaining external acts of devotion. Since they can be performed to glorify God Most High, they can also be performed for other worldly interests, such as hypocrisy, praise, and commendation. That is why the word ikhlaṣ is so designated.

The third name: the word iḥsān ("virtue").<sup>73</sup> God Most High has said, "Is the reward for virtue aught save virtue?"<sup>74</sup> That is, is the reward of faith other than faith? Know, O man, that the covenant of

servanthood is incumbent upon you, and that the covenant of Lordship is incumbent upon His magnanimity, as He Most High has said, "and fulfill your covenant, I shall fulfill My covenant."<sup>75</sup>

The covenant of your servanthood is that you be a servant to God, not to someone else, and that you know that everything except God is a servant to God, as He Most High has said, "There is none in the heavens and the earth but cometh unto the Compassionate as a servant."<sup>76</sup>

The phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh indicates one's recognition that everything except Him is His servant; so it is established that saying Lā ilāhe illa 'llāh is virtue (iḥsān) on the part of the servant; hence His words, "Is the reward of virtue aught save virtue?"<sup>77</sup> That is, is the reward of one who produces the statement Lā ilāha illa 'llāh other than his being put under the protection of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh? God Most High has said, "For those who do good is the best reward, and even more."<sup>78</sup>

The meaning in His saying "those who do good" is the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, according to what the principal commentators have agreed upon, because if one were to say that and die, one would enter Paradise. God Most High has said, "And who is better in speech than him who prayeth unto God."<sup>79</sup> It is agreed that the verse was revealed with reference to the excellence of the call to prayer, because it includes Lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

God Most High has said, "Those who hear the word and follow the best thereof,"<sup>80</sup> and the best word is Lā ilāha illa 'llāh. He Most High has said, "Lo! God enjoineth justice and virtue."<sup>81</sup> It is said that justice is evading what is other than God and virtue is drawing near to God. He Most High has also said, "If ye do good, ye do good for your own souls."<sup>82</sup> Doing good is saying Lā ilāha illa 'llāh.



Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī transmitted the following: "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, 'For those who do good is the best reward,<sup>83</sup> that is, those who say Lā ilāha illa 'llāh.'" 'Doing good' is Paradise and 'even more' is seeing His noble face.<sup>84</sup> Wherever an act is better, its agent is more virtuous. The best invocation is Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, and the best gnosis is the gnosis of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh. This gnosis and this invocation are virtue (ihsān).

The fourth name is da'wat al-haqq ("the call of the Truth"). God Most High has said in the Sūrah of ar-Ra'd ("The Thunder"), "Unto Him is the Call of the Truth."<sup>85</sup> That means delimitation, namely, that this call of the Truth belongs to Him, not to someone else, as God Most High has said, "Unto you is your religion and unto me is my religion."<sup>86</sup> In other words, you have your religion which is not for someone other than you.

The reason for its meaning the delimitation is that Truth is the opposite of falsehood. Truth is Being and falsehood is nonbeing. Inasmuch as the Truth (may He be glorified!) is real in His Essence because of His Essence and His Attributes, and inasmuch as alteration of His true nature is impossible, gnosis of Him is true gnosis, remembrance of Him is true remembrance, and calling to Him is true calling. As for what is other-than-He, it is a possibility because of its essence. But knowledge of it is not necessary to ascertain nor is remembrance of it nor calling out to it. The call of the Truth is sometimes from the Truth for the Truth to the Truth and sometimes it is from mankind for the Truth to mankind.

As for the call of the Truth being from the Truth, verily it is He who calls the heart to His presence. Were it not for His call to that

presence and the granting of His success in that union, then from whence is the human intelligence able to unite with the Majesty of the presence of God Most High? Moreover, the principles of movement and the beginnings of life ultimately lead to the power of God Most High and His decrees. God Most High has said, "God's is the decision in the past and in the future."<sup>87</sup>

As for that being the call of the Truth, God Most High has said, "Whose is the sovereignty this day?"<sup>88</sup> As for that ultimately leading to the Truth, God Most High has said, "And that thy Lord, He is the goal."<sup>89</sup> As for the call of the Truth sometimes being from mankind, He has said, "And who is better in speech than him who calleth unto God and doeth right."<sup>90</sup>

The fifth name: the word 'adl ("justice"). God Most High has said, "Lo! God enjoineth justice and kindness."<sup>91</sup> A ḥadīth states, "Indeed, Gabriel (on him be peace!) said, 'O Muḥammad, Lo! God enjoineth justice and kindness.'"<sup>92</sup>

Ibn 'Abbās said, "Justice is the testimony that there is no divinity but God, and virtue is the practice of servanthood." It is said, "Justice is a testimony that 'There is no divinity but God,' and virtue is sincerity therein." It has also been said, "Justice is toward people and virtue is vis-a-vis oneself in obedience." God Most High has said, "If ye do good, ye do good for your own souls."<sup>93</sup>

It is said, "He commands justice with the bodily members and virtue with the heart so that He may nurture it with the food of Oneness and the drink of love." It is said that through justice comes the vision of being in need of the Truth, and through virtue comes the contemplation of virtuous conduct of the Truth towards everything in the Creation.

There are several reasons for giving the Testimony of Faith this name of "justice." First: justice in everything is attaining that which leads to equilibrium therein and perfection of its state. Perfection of the state of the sensorial faculties is in the awareness of sensorial things. Perfection of the state of the psychic faculties is in seeking beneficial corporeal things. Perfection of the state of nervous strength is in rejecting things incompatible with the body. As for the intellectual faculty, the perfection of its state and its ultimate felicity lies in having the forms of the inner realities and the images of intelligible things engraved upon it as they are until such time as the intellectual faculty becomes like a mirror wherein the forms of faces are revealed perfectly. The noblest and the loftiest of intelligible things are the gnosis of the Majesty of God, His Sanctity, His Sublimeness, and His Might. He is the goal of justice and equilibrium for human spirits and intellectual faculties; and He created them to be recaptive to this state and absorbed in it.

The second reason: the gnosis of God is intermediate between immoderation, which is ascribing human characteristics to God (tashbīh), and negligence, which is denying any attributes to God (ta'tīl). Whosoever exaggerates in the way of affirmation (ithbāt) falls into anthropomorphism; and whosoever exaggerates in the way of negation (naḥy) falls into denial of all attributes. The Truth lies in the balance between the two extremes.

The third reason: whosoever abandons reasoning and argumentation in regard to gnosis of God and turns to the idea that the Truth is what he feels and imagines falls into error. As for the one who penetrates deeply into investigation, desiring union with the depth of Infinity, he becomes confused and hesitant--rather, he becomes blind. Verily, the

light of the Majesty of the Divinity blinds the eyes of human reasoning. These two extremes then become objectionable. It is better to look for equilibrium and to abandon going too deeply into things as the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "Reflect on the Creation, but do not reflect on the Creator." God Most High commanded justice in Oneness and said, "Ye will never be able to deal justly between wives, however much ye wish to."<sup>94</sup> He made the weak impotent and placed the highborn in a position of power so that each might know that everything is from Him.

The sixth name is at-tayyib min al-qawl ("the good in speech"). God Most High has said, "They are guided unto the good in speech,"<sup>95</sup> that is, to Lā ilāha illā 'llāh. The definite article is for the sake of comprehensiveness,<sup>96</sup> as if He had said, "There is nothing delicious or good except this," because the good of something else in relation to His goodness is as if it were not good at all. What word is sweeter or purer than the affirmation of Oneness (tawḥīd)? Unbelief is a cause for seventy years of impurity, which is removed by the remembrance of this phrase one time. That is, because the good is sweet and the sweet is the awareness of what is appropriate. That which is appropriate for the sensorial faculties is what is perceived through the senses. That which is appropriate for intellectual faculties is the awareness of the Majesty of God Most High and His Sanctity and the awareness of the sensorial faculty.

As for what the sensorial faculties grasp, it is the accidents found in existing, corruptible bodies; and what the intellectual faculties grasp is the Essence of God Most High and His Sublimeness. The stronger the comprehension and the nobler what is grasped, the nobler and loftier is the joy reached because of that awareness. With regard

to this, the relationship of intellectual pleasure to the sensorial in terms of honor and power is as the relationship of intellectual discernment to sensorial awareness, and as the relationship of the Essence of God Most High in His Attributes, in Glory and Exaltedness, to existing accidents and matter. Just as there is no end to the relationship which occurs between these two types of discernment and what is discerned, so likewise there is no end to the relationship occurring between intellectual pleasures obtained from the discernment of the Majesty of God and from the pleasures obtained through the awareness of food and fragrances and the rest of the senses. It is evident that the absolute good is the gnosis of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, the remembrance of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, and immersion in the Light of the Majesty of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

The seventh name is al-kalimat at-tayyibah ("the good word"). God Most High has said, "God sets forth a perable--a good word."<sup>97</sup> It is called that because it is free from anthropomorphism and from denying to Him all attributes, since it is an intermediate way between the two, differing from each one of them, as milk differs from phlegm and blood and is therefore free from each one of them.

Commentators have said, "The good tree is the date palm." It resembles the affirmation of Oneness (tawhīd) because it grows in some countries but not in others: the affirmation of Oneness flows on the tongue of some people but not on those of others, and the gnosis of Oneness occurs in one heart but not in another; because the date palm is the tallest of trees,<sup>98</sup> just as the utterance of Oneness is the loftiest of words; and because the roots of the date palm are firmly in the ground while its branches are in the heavens, just as the roots of the good word are firmly in the heart--and this is gnosis--while its branches are in the heavens: "Unto Him good words ascend."<sup>99</sup>

The eighth name is al-kalimat ath-thēbitah ("The firm word"). God Most High has said, "God confirmeth those who believe by a firm word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter."<sup>100</sup> It is called that because the Invoked, the Known, is firm, necessarily immutable on account of His Essence, and inceptible of nonbeing due to His Essence; hence likewise His "word."

The ninth name is kalimat et-taqwā ("the word of piety"). God Most High has said, "And He imposed upon them the word of self-restraint."<sup>101</sup> It is called that because the one who says Lā ilāha illa 'llāh protects himself against unbelief, and because the phrase is a protection for your body from the sword, for your property from plunder, and for your children from captivity. If the tongue is united with the heart, the phrase becomes a protection for your heart from unbelief; and if it is successful, it becomes a protection for your limbs from sin.

The tenth name is al-kelimat el-bāqiyah ("the everlasting word"). Many Qur'ānic commentators have said, regarding His words (may He be exalted!), "And he<sup>102</sup> made it an everlasting word among his progeny,"<sup>103</sup> that "it" refers to the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh due to His words in the preceding verse, "Lo! I am innocent of what ye worship, save Him who did create me, for He will surely guide me."<sup>104</sup> The meaning of "Lo! I am innocent of what ye worship" is an exclusion of the Divinity from among the things which they used to worship. Then he said, "Save Him who did create me": therein is affirmation of the Divinity of the One who created him; and the totality of that is Lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

The eleventh name is el-istiḳāmah ("uprightness"). God Most High has said, "Lo! those who say: Our Lord is God, and afterwards are upright."<sup>105</sup> It is the saying of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh; and their saying

"Our Lord is God" is a confirmation of the existence of the Lord Most High. However, among mankind are those who affirm that He has an equal and partner--may God be exalted! And among them are those who deny that, and they are the ones who are upright, following the straight path. Uprightness at the resurrection is in proportion to uprightiness in denying partners to God.

The twelfth name is kalimatu' llāh al-'ulyā ("the most supreme word of God"). He Most High has said, "And He made the word of those who disbelieved the lowest, while God's Word it was that became the highest."<sup>106</sup> That is due to the fact that when the light of this Word is revealed in the heart, it comes after the attainment of strength through God. Consequently, the gnostics who are immersed in the light of the Majesty of God look down on worldly conditions and mighty kings as contemptible. They are not concerned about warfare, nor do they give any consideration to the pleasures and beauties of this world whatsoever.

Do you not see that when the light of this Word appeared to the magicians of Pharoeh, they did not notice the cutting of their hands and feet? And do you not see that our master Muḥammad (may God bless him and grant him peace!), when he was immersed in this light, did not notice the world of Dominion (al-Malakūt), as He Most High has said, "The eye turned not aside nor yet was overbold."<sup>107</sup> In this world the Word of God towers above the rest of the religions: God Most High has said, "that He may cause it to prevail over all religions."<sup>108</sup> And it rises above all sins, for verily, it effaces all sins, but no sin can efface it.

The thirteenth name is al-mathal al-a'lā ("the sublime similitude"). Qatādah said, in reference to God's words (may He be exalted!), "and God's is the sublime similitude,"<sup>109</sup> that "its meaning is the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh." The meaning of "similitude" here is "attribute"; such is what the linguists say; and its analogue is in His words (may He be exalted!), "The similitude of the Garden which is promised unto those who keep their duty,"<sup>110</sup> that is, the attribute of Paradise.

The fourteenth name is al-'ahd ("the covenant"). Ibn 'Abbās said in regard to His words (may He be exalted!), "They will have no power of intercession save him who hath made a covenant with the Compassionate,"<sup>111</sup> that the the covenant is the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

The fifteenth name is maqālīd as-samawāt wa'l-arḍ ("the keys of the heavens and the earth"). Ibn 'Abbās said, "It is the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, because associationism (shirk) is a cause for the corruption of the world." God Most High has said, "Whereby almost the heavens are torn and the earth is split asunder and the mountains fall into ruins that ye ascribe unto the Compassionate a son."<sup>112</sup>

Since that is the case, the affirmation of the Oneness of God (tawḥīd) is the well-being of the world. The gates of heaven do not open upon supplication except through saying Lā ilāha illa 'llāh. Neither are the gates of Paradise opened except through this phrase nor are the gates of hell closed except through this saying. The gates of the heart are not opened except by these words, and various kinds of evil suggestions are not repelled except by this phrase. Hence, it is the noblest key of the heavens and the earth and the mightiest key of spirits, souls, bodies and intellects.

The sixteenth name is the word al-Haqq ("the Truth") due to His words (may He be exalted!), "And those unto whom they cry instead of Him possess no power of intercession, saving him who beareth witness unto the Truth knowingly,"<sup>113</sup> that is, the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

The seventeenth name is al-furwāh al-wuthqā ("the firm handhold"). God Most High has said, "And he who rejecteth false deities and believeth in God hath grasped a firm handhold,"<sup>114</sup> that is, saying Lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

The eighteenth name is the word as-sidq ("veracity") due to His Words (may He be exalted!), "And whoso bringeth the Truth and believeth therein."<sup>115</sup>

The nineteenth name is kalimat as-sawā' ("the word of common agreement"). God Most High has said, "Come ye to an agreement between us and you."<sup>116</sup> Abu'l-<sup>5</sup>Aliyah said, "It is the words Lā ilāha illa 'llāh."

#### Section [8]

The word al-ilāh ("the deity") is a name given to anything worshipped, whether rightly or wrongly; then it prevailed as the name given to the One rightly worshipped. As for the word Allāh (God), it is said to be a derivative;<sup>117</sup> scholars have different opinions regarding it. It is said to be taken from aliha ila'r-rajul ("he took refuge with the man") which means to take refuge with someone from something that happened. But then alahahu ("he protected him") means to give someone sanctuary; the protector is named ilāh just as the one who leads people in prayer (amma) is called imām.

It is said to be taken from waliha, yawlahu;<sup>118</sup> originally it was walaha but the waw was replaced by a hamzah,<sup>119</sup> just as one says ishāh for wishāh ("sash"). Al-walah is intense love. It should have been necessary to say ma'lūh<sup>120</sup> ("adored"), just as one says ma'būd ("worshipped"); but that was changed, just as one says kitāb ("piece of writing") for maktūb ("what is written") and hisāb ("calculation") for mahsub ("what is counted").

It is also said to be taken from lāba, yalūhu,<sup>121</sup> meaning "to be covered," that is, "He veiled the mind from His Reality"; and it is said to be from lāha, yalūhu, which means "to arise"; one says lāhat ash-shams, "the sun arose." According to some, the word comes from alihtu bi'l-makān, "I dwelt in a place," when one remains there; that is an indication of the duration of one's stay. A poet has said,

We took refuge (alihna) in a house whose outline was  
not clear  
As if its remains were a tattoo mark on the hand.

The word Allah is said to be from aliha, ya'lahu, which means "to be confused"; that is an indication of the confusion of the intellect in understanding the essence of His Reality. It is also said to be from at-ta'lluh, which is devoting oneself to the service of God (ta'abbud). One says alaha, ya'lahu, ilahāh, that is, 'abada, ya'budu, 'ibādah ("he worshipped," "he worships," "worshipping"). Ibn 'Abbās recited: "and flout thee and thy gods (ilāhatak)?"<sup>122</sup> that is 'ibādatak ("thy acts of devotion").

At-Tilimsānī said, "It is closer to His words (may He be exalted!), 'And ask those of Our messengers whom We sent before Thee: Did We ever appoint gods (ālihah) to be worshipped beside the Compassionate?"<sup>123</sup>

The meaning of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh is "There is no one worshipped except God." It is said: The word Allāh is not a derivative; however, it takes the place of a proper noun because it is described by the rest of the Names while it does not describe itself, description being the characteristic of the proper noun. We only say it is not a proper noun due to the lack of canonical permission. It is a name for the true Being that contains the Attributes of the Divinity; it is qualified by the qualities of Lordship, the one who is uniquely possessed of real Being. Everything other-than-Him derives its being from Him. This Name is greater than the Ninety-nine Names,<sup>124</sup> because it refers to the Essence that contains all the Attributes of the Divinity. The origin of the rest of the Names indicates only their origin from an idea, such as knowledge or the like.

Amongst the Arabs, it is not mentioned before the time of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) nor after him that the pronunciation of this Name was used in its present form, let alone its being used as an attribute for someone other-than-Him. In the oral traditions, it is mentioned that in pre-Islamic times (al-jāhiliyyah), the Arabs used to put down in their writings, "In thy name, O God (Allāhumma)"; and He Most High has said, "Knowest thou one that can be named along with Him?"<sup>125</sup>

For this reason al-Junayd (may God be pleased with him!) said, "No one knows God but God and He gave the Names to His creatures, veiling them thereby." He Most High said, "Therefore, praise the Name of thy Lord, the Supreme."<sup>126</sup>

For, by God, no one knows God but God in the two existences and the two worlds and in the two "days."<sup>127</sup> God Most High has contracted the expansion of intellects, spirits, and hearts into the domain of this

Name just as He has expanded them in the domain of the Names. Consequently, no insolence can take place nor does it occur to the mind to designate others by this Name, in spite of the presence of infidels and despotic pharaohs and the intensity of their disbelief. For that reason, each of the Names is good to emulate except this Name. Verily, it is for devotion.

The servant's part in this Name must be in adoring God. I mean by this that his heart and aspiration should be absorbed in God Most High, seeing neither other-than-Him nor being attentive to anything but Him, neither hoping for nor fearing aught but Him. Attachment to this Name is not valid save after emulating the totality of Names in words, deeds, and states, outwardly and inwardly.

Whosoever desires proximity to God through this Name should follow seven principles: to regard what is other-than-God as contemptible without delay; to glorify the commandments of God through illumination and the effacement of the worlds through contemplation; to extinguish oneself in everything totally; to devote one's zeal to God indefatigably; to be inwardly vigilant over one's breathing;<sup>128</sup> and to invoke the most supreme Name outwardly and inwardly until one is ardently devoted to God--that is, until one's inner being is immersed in His Being in the reality of one's contemplation, neither seeing other-than-Him nor perceiving anything but Him. Then God will watch over one and one's states and protect one's secrets (asrār) from alterities (aghyār).

According to ash-Shiblī (may God have mercy upon him!), "No one has truly said Allāh save Allāh, and whosoever has said it has done so out of his good fortune." Abū Sa'īd al-Kharrāz said, "Whosoever goes beyond the bounds of self-discipline falls into the forgetfulness of his good

fortune from God and forgetfulness of his need for God. For if his limbs could speak, verily they would say Allāh, Allāh." These are they whose innermost being ardently loves God; their forms are obliterated in the essence of Oneness; God makes creatures subservient to them and makes the mysteries subject to them. Who, then, is the one who will enter a retreat with this Name until he becomes ardently immersed in it?

The reality of adoration (tawalluh) is that one be so immersed that he does not sense whether he is invoking or being silent, whether he is existent or nonexistent, until the invocation overcomes him and he hears every member of his body saying Allāh, Allāh in a tongue which he hears. Even if his blood were shed, verily it would spell out Allāh, Allāh, and so forth.

Know that in every atom among the atoms of the world and even in what is smaller than an atom, there is a mystery among the mysteries of God's Name. By virtue of that mystery, every knower—whatever his kind might be and whether he knows it or not—understands Him and affirms Oneness of Him, as God Most High has said, "And unto God falleth prostrate whosoever is in the heavens and earth, willingly or unwillingly."<sup>129</sup>

The first alif<sup>130</sup> refers to the Essence; the first lām refers to the Attributes of the Essence; the second lām refers to the names of the Acts; the third lām<sup>131</sup> refers to the names of Qualities based on the names of the Attributes; and the hā' refers to the demonstrative pronouns within the bidden Names.

It is related that a man was standing on 'Arafāt<sup>132</sup> and in his hand were seven stones. He said, "O ye seven stones, bear witness that I bear witness that there is no divinity but God, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God." Later he slept and dreamt that the Day of Judgment had come, that he had been examined and that hell-fire had been decreed for him. When he was led to one of the doors of hell, one of these seven stones came and threw itself against that door. The angels of chastisement gathered to remove it but they could not. Then he was led to the second door, but the same thing occurred there as with the first, and so on for seven doors. So he was led to the Throne and God (may He be glorified!) said, "My servant, you made the stones bear witness; hence, thou wilt not forfeit thy right; and I am a Witness to thy testimony of faith in My Oneness. Enter Paradise." When he approached the doors of Paradise, lo, they were closed. So the testimony of Lā ilāha illa 'llāh came and opened the doors, and the men entered Paradise.

It is mentioned that the water in Baghdād rose until the city was on the verge of being submerged. One of the righteous said,

This night I dreamt that I saw myself standing on the edge of the Tigris River, saying, "There is no power or strength save in God! (Lā hawla wa lā quwata illā bi'llāh) Baghdad is flooded!" A handsome man came and I knew that he was an angel, and another angel came from another direction. One of them said to the other, "What have you been commanded to do?" He said, "I was commanded to drown Baghdad, then I was prohibited from doing it." The other asked, "Why?" He answered, "The angels of the night reported that seven hundred girls had been deflowered yesterday in Baghdād. So God became angry and commanded me to drown it. But the angel of the day reported in the morning nine hundred

calls to prayer (adhān) and introductory formulas to the prayers (iqāmah). So God pardoned the former through the latter."

The one who had draamt said, "I awakened and went to the Tigris, and lo! the water had receded."

Someone has said, "Lā ilāha illa 'llāh. Muḥammad rasūlu'llāh" ("There is no divinity but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God") consists of twenty-four letters; the hours of the day and night are of the same number. It is as if it were said, 'Every sin which I have committed, whether great or small, secretly or openly, accidentally or intentionally, by word or deed during these hours is pardoned by these words.'"

Also the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh, Muḥammad rasūlu'llāh consists of seven words. The servant has seven organs and hellfire has seven doors. Each of these seven words closes one of the seven doors to one of the seven organs.

It is said that the phrase Lā ilāha illa 'llāh consists of twelve letters; so inevitably twelve obligations are enjoined—six outward and six inward. As for the outward ones, they include ritual purity, prayer, almsgiving, fasting, the pilgrimage, and holy war. As for the inward, they include trust in God, commitment, patience, contentment, asceticism, and repentance.

As for huwa ("He"), it is composed of two letters.<sup>133</sup> They are the realities of the inhalation and exhalation, whether or not you pronounce it. The inhalation is the hā' and the exhalation is the wāw, which is expansion. The hā' pertains to the breath of life and the wāw comes out of the fire of inner emotions. Indeed, God Most High made the interior the seat of emotions, among which are the fervor of love for God Most

High, the eagerness of seeking, the enthusiasm of invoking, the intensity of meditating, and the warmth of one's nature. Contraction and expansion of one's spiritual state will not disappear until the servant's appointed time. Thus, God comes between the hā' and the wāw by means of a veil hidden from the illusions of the mind and, indeed, by means of what God Most High decreed in His eternal, pre-existing knowledge.

All created beings exist because of God Most High in accordance with their subtle breaths, and all are subject to His power; were it not for that, chastisement would have overcome them. God spares the inner being of men from being overwhelmed by emotions through the selfsame inward name, which is huwa. For if the gnostic says huwa, those burning passions gather and are expelled by the same breath to the spirit of the air. Then the breath returns with the coolness of the air, which is huwa, except that it is coolness outwardly and heat inwardly, because it is air. The secret of the alif which has been added to the huwa<sup>134</sup> is that it connotes intensification of life, because it is a combination of the inward huwa and the outward alif with respect to the affirmation of Oneness.

As for the invocation of transcendence, it is "Glory be to God and in praise of Him" (Subḥāna 'llāh wa bi-ḥamdih). The meaning of glorification (tasbīh) is transcendence (tanzīh), and the saying "Glory be to Him" (subḥānahu) is in the accusative as a verbal noun. You say, "I praise God with all glory" (sabbāḥtu 'llāh tasbīḥan wa subḥānan). The meaning of "Glory be to God" (subḥāna 'llāh) is that transcendence belongs to Him and He is free of every imperfection and attribute of creatures. Saying "and in praise of Him" (wa bi-ḥamdih) that is, "in



praise of Thee I glorify Thee" means "by Thy bounty toward me and Thy gifts and blessings upon me, I glorify, not by my power or strength. Therein is gratitude towards God Most High for this blessing and recognition of it and commitment to God Most High. Verily, all deeds belong to Him Most High.

## CONCLUSION OF THE BOOK

It Includes What Has Been Mentioned in the Way of Remembrance  
in All Situations and Times During the Day and the Night

Hadith: When something distressed the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!), he would say, "O Living, Everlasting God, by Thy mercy, I seek help."<sup>1</sup>

Hadith: When something used to concern him, he would look up at the sky and say, "Glory be to God, the Supreme."<sup>2</sup>

Hadith: He also said, "When worry or sadness befalls one, let him supplicate with these words:

O God, I am Thy servant, son of Thy servant, son of Thy bondwoman, in Thy grasp. My forelock is in Thy hand, Thy judgment is carried out in me, Thy decrees toward me are just. I ask Thee by every Name which is Thine, by which Thou hast designated Thyself or hast revealed in Thy Book, or which Thou hast taught to anyone of Thy creatures or hast kept for Thyself in the knowledge of the Unseen World, that Thou maketh the Qur'ān the light of my mind, the springtime of my heart, the departing of my sadness, the disappearance of my worry.

A man among the people said, 'O Messenger of God, one who is deceived is the one who forgets these words.' He answered, 'Yes, indeed! So say them and teach them, for whosoever says them as a petition, seeking what they mean, God will make his sadness disappear and prolong his happiness.'<sup>3</sup>

Hadith: According to 'Alī (may God honor him!) "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) taught me these words and

instructed me that, if any sorrow or misfortune befell me, to say the following:

There is no divinity but God, the Supreme, the Most Generous. Glory be to Him; may God, the Lord of the Great Throne be blessed. Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds."<sup>4</sup>

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Jaʿfar used to teach these words and utter them over the ill, and he used to teach them to the unmarried among his daughters.

Hadith: He said, "The words of the distressed are: 'O God, I hope for Thy mercy. Do not entrust me to myself for the twinkling of an eye, and make right all of my affairs for me. There is no divinity but Thou.'"<sup>5</sup>

Hadith: "Verily, I know an utterance which someone in distress cannot say but God will comfort him. It is the utterance of my brother Jonah (on him be peace!): 'He cried out in the darkness that there is no divinity but Thou; may Thou be glorified! Verily, I have been amongst the wrongdoers.'"<sup>6</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever reads the Verse of the Throne<sup>7</sup> and the concluding verses of Sūrat al-Baqarah<sup>8</sup> during times of distress, God will help him."<sup>9</sup>

Hadith: "When you fear a power or something else say:

There is no divinity but God the Clement, the Generous. Glory be to God, Lord of the Seven Heavens and Lord of the Supreme Throne. There is no divinity but Thou. May he in thy charge become strong and Thy praise exalted."<sup>10</sup>

Hadith: ʿAbd al-Mālik wrote to al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf, "Look after Anas ibn Mālik, the servant of the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!), go to his assemblies, elevate him, give him a good reward and honor him."

Anas said, "I went to al-Ḥajjāj and he said to me the same day, "O Abū Hamza,<sup>11</sup> I would like to show you a horse; tell me how it compares with the horses belonging to the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!)"

"So he showed it to me and I said, 'What a difference between them! The very dung and urine and forage of the Prophet's horses would have been a reward!'"

Al-Ḥajjāj said, "If it were not for the fact that the Commander of the Faithful wrote to me about you, I would have struck you on the head!"

I said to him, "You cannot do that."

He said to me, "And why not?"

I answered, "Because the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) taught me a prayer, which, when I utter it, makes me fear no devil or power or any beast of prey."

Al-Ḥajjāj said, "O Abū Hamza, teach your nephew Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥajjāj."

I refused him. So he said to his son, "Go to your Uncle Anas, and ask him to teach that to you."

Abān said, "He explained it, for when death was approaching Anas, he called for me and said, 'O Aḥmar,<sup>12</sup> now the time has come; respect for you must be shown. I shall teach you the prayer which the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) taught me, but do not teach it to anyone who does not fear God (may He be powerful and exalted!)' or something approximating that. He said,

God is Great, God is Great, God is Great; may 'In the Name of God' be upon my soul and my religion; may 'In the Name of God' be upon everything which my Lord

nath bestowed upon me; 'In the Name of God' is the best of Names; 'In the name of God,' with whose Name nothing on earth can cause harm nor can any malady in heaven; 'In the Name of God' I begin and upon God do I rely. God, God, my Lord, I do not associate partners with Him whatsoever. O God, I ask Thee out of Thy goodness from Thy goodness which naught but Thee giveth. May those in Thy charge be magnified and Thy praise be exalted! There is no divinity other than Thee. Put me in Thy protection from every evil and from the accursed devil. O God, by Thee I guard against the evil of all which Thou hast created that is possessed of evil, and by Thee I take heed of them; and I offer this in front of me: 'In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, Say: He is God the One! God the Eternal! He begetteth not nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him';<sup>13</sup> and I offer the same prayer behind me, the same on my right, the same on my left, and the same above me."

Hadith: According to 'Alī (may God be pleased with him!), "When you are in a valley and fear predatory animals, say, 'I take refuge in Daniel and the den from the evil of the lion.'"<sup>14</sup>

Hadith: While the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) was walking with his Companions, lo, the thong of his sandal broke. He said, "Verily we belong to God and to Him we return."<sup>15</sup> Those with him said, "Is this a misfortune?"<sup>16</sup> He said, "Yes, everything that troubles the believer is a misfortune."<sup>17</sup>

Hadith: "One should ask for all of his needs; one should even ask Him for the thong of his sandal when it breaks."<sup>18</sup>

On the authority of 'Ā'ishah (may God be pleased with her!), "Ask God for everything, even for the sandal thong; for verily, if God does not make something easy, it will not be easy."<sup>19</sup>

Hadith: "God does not bestow a blessing upon a servant who then says, 'Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds,' without that which he has been given being better than that which was taken away."<sup>20</sup>

Hadith: On the authority of az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām (may God be pleased with him!), who related, "I heard the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) when he recited this verse: 'God is witness that there is no deity save Him, as do the angels and men of learning, maintaining His Creation in justice. There is no deity save Him, the Almighty, the Wise.'<sup>21</sup> The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, 'And I am a witness, that is, to my Lord.'<sup>22</sup>

Hadith: "God does not bestow the blessings of family or property or children upon a servant who recites, 'As God wills; there is no power save in God,' in order that he then see them come to harm before his death."<sup>23</sup>

#### Section [1]

Hadith: There is not a servant who commits a sin, then performs his ablution and preys two prostrations, asking God's forgiveness for that sin and reciting the following verse, but that He will forgive him: "Yet whoso doeth evil or wrongeth his soul."<sup>24</sup>

Hadith: "Whoever asks pardon of God frequently, God will turn his every care into joy and provide a way out of every difficulty, and He will provide for him in such a way that he cannot calculate."<sup>25</sup>

Hadith: "He is not a constant transgressor who asks God for forgiveness, even though he relapses seventy times a day."<sup>26</sup>

Hadith: "Verily, I ask God for forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance one hundred times every day."<sup>27</sup>

Hadith: "Whoever asks God for forgiveness seventy times a day is not inscribed among the forgetful."<sup>28</sup>

Hadith: "Our Lord (may He be sighty and exalted!) says regarding the last third of the night, 'Whosoever calls to Me, I shall answer him; whosoever asks forgiveness of Me, I shall pardon him until daybreak appears.'"<sup>29</sup>

Hadith: "O Messenger of God, how do I ask for God's forgiveness?" He answered, "Say: O God forgive us, have mercy upon us, restore us to Thy grace. Verily, Thou art the Most Forgiving, the Merciful."<sup>30</sup>

#### Asking God's Forgiveness on Fridays

Hadith: "There is a time on Fridays during which if a servant asks forgiveness of God therein, He will pardon him."<sup>31</sup>

Hadith: When the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) entered the mosque on Fridays, he would take hold of the two posts of the door of the mosque and say, "O God, make me the one who turns to Thee the most often of all, the one who is the nearest of the near to Thee, and the one most preferred of those who ask of Thee and desire Thee."<sup>32</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever recites 'Say: He is God the One!'<sup>33</sup> and 'Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the Daybreak,'<sup>34</sup> and 'Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of Mankind,'<sup>35</sup> seven times after the Friday prayer, God will protect him from harm with these verses until the next Friday."<sup>36</sup>

Hadith: "It was related by 'Amr ibn Qays al-Malā'ī, who said,

It has reached me that whosoever fasts Wednesday, Thursdays, and Fridays, then performs the Friday prayer with the Muslims, then remains stationary while greeting others as the imam does,<sup>37</sup> then recites the first chapter of the Qur'an and 'Say: He is God the One!'<sup>38</sup> ten times, then extends his hands up to God, saying, 'O God, I ask Thee by Thy Name, the Most High (al-A'ālā), the Most High, the Most High;

the Mightiest (al-A'azz), the Mightiest, the Mightiest; the Noblest (al-Akram), the Noblest, the Noblest; there is no divinity but God, the Most Majestic (al-Ajall), the Most Majestic, the Supreme (al-'Azīm), the Most Supreme (al-A'zam)' then asks something of God, He will certainly give it to Him sooner or later; but you are all in a hurry."<sup>39</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says, 'Glory and praise be to God the Supreme' one hundred times after the Friday prayer has ended, God will pardon one hundred thousand sins for him and twenty-four thousand sins for his parents."<sup>40</sup>

Hadith: "Ask God's blessings upon me often on Fridays."<sup>41</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever hears me mentioned but does not ask God's blessings upon me is made miserable."<sup>42</sup>

## CHAPTER [X]

### INCANTATIONS

It was related by 'Alqamah ibn 'Abd Allāh (may God be pleased with him!) who said, "An incantation against snakes was mentioned to the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!); so he said, 'Recite it to me,' I then recited it to him: 'In the Name of God, the open wound of a sword on the head (shajjah qaraniyyah) is the salty wave of a sea (malhat bahr), a generous gift (qaft).' The Prophet said, 'These are the words of covenants that Solomon, the son of David (peace be upon them!), observed, in which I see no harm.' A man with 'Alqamah was bitten by a snake, so 'Alqamah used the incantation on him, and it was as if he had been freed from shackles."<sup>1</sup>

In another version, 'Amr said, "It has reached us that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) forbade spitting with the incantation."<sup>2</sup>

Hadith: The following was related by 'Uthmān ibn Abi'l-'Ās: "I went to the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) and said, 'O Messenger of God, I used to remember people, then something happened to me and I forgot some of them.' He put his hand upon my chest, then said, 'O God, expel the devil from him.' God expelled forgetfulness from me."<sup>3</sup>

'Uthmān said, "Then I went to the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) another time when pain afflicted me. He said to me, 'Place your hand upon it and say: "I take refuge in the might and

power of God from the evil that I have acquired," seven times.' Then God lifted it from me."<sup>4</sup>

Hadith: 'Uthmān ibn Abi'l-'Ās said, "O Messenger of God, verily the devil interferes between me and my prayers and my Qur'ānic recitation, making them obscure to me." The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, 'That is a devil who is called Khinzab. When you perceive him, take refuge in God from him and spit to your left three times.' So I did that and God made him depart from me." Muslim transmitted it.<sup>5</sup>

Abū Rashīd said, "I told Ibn 'Abbāse, 'There is nothing that I find in myself, that is, nothing of doubt.' He said, 'When you see such a thing, say: "He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward and He is the Knower of all things."'"<sup>6</sup>

## Section [1]

### On Invoking Morning and Evening

God Most High has said, "O ye who believe! Remember God with much remembrance, and glorify him early and late."<sup>7</sup> He said, "Glorify thy Lord with praise evening and morning."<sup>8</sup> He also said, "Glorify thy Lord with praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting."<sup>9</sup>

Hadith: Talq ibn Habib related the following tradition:

A man came to Abu'd-Dardā' and said, "O Abu'd-Dardā', your house has burned down!" He answered, "It has not; God would not do that because of the words I heard from the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!). Whosoever says them at the beginning of his day will see no calamity befall him until evening and whosoever says them

at the end of his day will see no calamity befall him until morning:

O God, Thou art my Lord. There is no divinity but Thou. Upon Thee do I rely and Thou art the Lord of the Supreme Throne. What God wills, will be and what He does not will, will not be. There is no power or strength save in God, the Lofty, the Supreme. I know that God has power over everything and that God's knowledge encompasses everything. O God, I take refuge in Thee from the evil in myself and from the evil in every beast whose forelock is in Thy hand. Verily, my Lord follows the straight path."<sup>10</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says 'Glory and praise be to God' one hundred times in the morning and in the evening will find no one arriving on the Day of Judgment with better than that which he has unless it is someone who has said the same as he or who has said it more often." Muslim transmitted it.<sup>11</sup>

Muslim also transmitted that when evening came, the Prophet of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) would say:

We have entered into evening and the Kingdom (al-mulk) has become God's; praise be to God; there is no divinity but God alone; He has no associate; His is the Kingdom, His is the praise; and He has power over everything. My Lord, I ask of Thee the best of what there is in this night and the best of what comes after it. And I take refuge in Thee from the evil of what is in this night and the evil of what comes after it. My Lord, I take refuge in Thee from sloth and the evil of arrogance. My Lord, I take refuge in Thee from chastisement in hellfire and from chastisement in the grave.

When morning came, he would say that also: "We have entered into morning and the Kingdom has become God's."<sup>12</sup>

Hadith:

Master of pardon, O God, Thou art my Lord. There is no divinity but Thee. Thou hast created me and I am Thy servant. I am under Thy covenant and Thy promise as far as it is within my power. I take

refuge in Thee from the evil that I have done. I acknowledge Thy bounty to me and I confess my sins, so forgive me, for verily, no one can forgive sins but Thou.

"Whosoever should say these words in the evening, then die that same night, will enter Paradise; and whosoever should say these words in the morning, then die that same day, will enter Paradise." Al-Bukhārī transmitted it.<sup>13</sup>

Hadith: "Nothing can hurt the servant who says three times, 'In the Name of God with whose Name nothing on earth or in heaven can be harmed, and He is the Heerer, the All-Knowing.' At-Tirmidhī verified it and found it to be a good hadith."<sup>14</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says in the morning or evening, 'O God, I have awakened; I bear witness to Thee and to the bearers of Thy Throne and Thy angels and all Thy creatures that verily, Thou art God than whom there is no divinity but Thou, and that Muḥammad is Thy servant and Thy Messenger,' God releases one-quarter of him from hellfire. Whosoever says it twice, God releases one-half of him from hellfire. Whosoever repeats it thrice, God releases three-fourths of him from hellfire; and if he repeats it four times, God releases him completely from hellfire." At-Tirmidhī said it was a good, but rare hadith.<sup>15</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says, 'There is no divinity but God alone; He has no partners. His is the Kingdom; His is the praise; He has power over everything,' one hundred times in a day, it is for him the equivalent in value of ten slaves, and one hundred good deeds are recorded for him and one hundred bad deeds are erased. It becomes a sanctuary for him from the devil that day until evening, and no one will bring anything better than what he brings forth save the man who has done more than he." This hadith is agreed upon by the authorities.<sup>16</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says, 'Glory and praise be to God,' one hundred times in a day will see his sins diminished even if they be as much as the foam on the sea." This hadith is agreed upon by the authorities.<sup>17</sup>

Hadith: "The most beloved of phrases to God Most High are four, any one of which you use will protect you from harm: Glory be to God, praise be to God, there is no divinity but God, and God is Great." Muslim transmitted it.<sup>18</sup>

Hadith: "Say: He is God, the One!"<sup>19</sup> and the last two chapters on taking refuge in God<sup>20</sup> three times in the early morning and evening, and it will suffice thee from everything." Abū Dā'ūd, at-Tirmidhī, and an-Nasā'ī transmitted it and Abū Dā'ūd verified it and found it to be a good hadith.<sup>21</sup>

Hadith: "When the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) wished to sleep, he would say, 'In Thy Name, O God, I die and live.' And when he awakened from his sleep, he would say, 'Praise be to God who has revived us after having made us die and to Him belongs the Resurrection.'" This is a hadith agreed upon by the authorities.<sup>22</sup>

Hadith: "When he went to bed every night, he would put his palms together and blow upon them, then recite 'Say: He is God, the One!'<sup>23</sup> and 'I take refuge in the Lord of Daybreak'<sup>24</sup> and 'Say: I take refuge in the Lord of Mankind';<sup>25</sup> then he would rub his palms wherever he could reach on his body and pass them over his head and face and in front of his body. He would do that three times." This is a hadith agreed upon by the authorities.<sup>26</sup>

In a hadith of Abū Hurayrah: "When you go to bed, recite the Verse of the Throne: 'Allah! There is no god save Him, the Living, the Eternal'<sup>27</sup> until you finish it; for indeed, a guardian angel from God

will never leave you nor the devil approach you." The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "The devil will give credence to you while being a liar." Al-Bukhārī transmitted it.<sup>28</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever recites the last two verses from Sūrat al-Baqarah<sup>29</sup> at night is sufficed by them." This is a hadith agreed upon by the authorities.<sup>30</sup>

Hadith: "When one of you arises from his bed, then returns to it, let him shake it out by the end of its cover three times; for indeed, he does not know what might have been left upon it after him. When he reclines, let him say, 'In Thy Name, my Lord, I lie down on my side and by Thee I arise. If Thou takest my soul, have mercy upon it, and if Thou release it, protect it as Thou protectest Thy pious servants.'" This is a hadith agreed upon by the religious authorities.<sup>31</sup>

Hadith: According to 'Alī (may God honor him!), Fāṭimah went to the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) to ask him for a servant, but she did not find him. She saw 'Ā'ishah and informed her of this. 'Alī said, "The Prophet came to us as we were going to bed and said,

Shall I not show you that which is better for you than a servant? When you go to your bed, say subhāna llāh ("glory be to God") thirty-three times and al-hamdu lillāh ("praise be to God") thirty-three times and say Allāhu akbar ("God is Great") thirty-four times. Verily that is better for you than any servant."<sup>32</sup>

'Alī said, "I have not quit reciting that since I heard it from the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!)." He was asked, "Not even the night of the Battle of Ṣiffīn?" He answered, "Not even the night of the Battle of Ṣiffīn." This is a hadith agreed upon by the authorities.<sup>33</sup> It is said, "Whosoever remembers these words will

not be overtaken by exhaustion in whatever work or activity occupies him."

Hadith: When the Prophet (May God bless him and grant him peace!) wished to sleep, he would place his right hand under his cheek, then say three times, "O God, protect me from Thy chastisement the day Thou dost resurrect Thy servants." Abū Dā'ūd and at-Tirmidhī transmitted it; the former verified it and found it to be a good hadith.<sup>34</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever say when he goes to bed, 'I ask forgiveness of God, the Supreme, than whom there is no divinity save Him, the Living, the Self-Subsistent, and to Him I repent,' three times, his sins are forgiven even if they be as plentiful as the foam on the sea and even if they be as numerous as the shifting sands, and even if they be as numerous as the days of this world." At-Tirmidhī said this is a good, rare hadith.<sup>35</sup>

Hadith: Al-Barā' ibn 'Azīb said, "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said to me, 'When you go to bed, make your ritual ablution as for prayer, then recline on your right side and say:

O God, I surrender myself to Thee, I turn my face to Thee, I entrust my affairs to Thee, and I commit my household to Thee out of both fear and love of Thee. There is no deliverance or refuge from Thee except in Thee. I believe in Thy sacred Books which Thou has revealed and in Thy Prophet whom Thou has sent.

If you should die, then you will die in accordance with primordial nature, so make these words the last thing you say."<sup>36</sup>

Ibn as-Sunnī related,

O God, Thou art my Lord; there is no divinity but Thee. Thou has created me and I am Thy servant. I

am under Thy covenant and Thy promise as far as it is within my power. I take refuge in Thee from the evil that I have done. I acknowledge Thy bounty to me and I confess my sins, so forgive me, for verily, no one forgives sins but Thou.

And if he should die the same day, he would die a martyr, and if he should die the same night, he would die a martyr."<sup>37</sup>

Hadith: "Say when you awaken,

Glory and praise be to God, there is no strength save in God. Whatsoever He wills, will be and whatsoever He does not will, will not be. I know that God has power over everything and that God's knowledge encompasses everything.

Verily, whosoever says these words when morning comes is protected until evening; and whosoever says them when evening comes is protected until morning." Ibn as-Sunnī transmitted it.<sup>38</sup>

He also transmitted the following, "Whosoever says when morning comes, 'I seek refuge in God the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing from the accursed devil' is protected from the accursed devil until evening."<sup>39</sup>

He also transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās (may God be pleased with them!)<sup>40</sup> that a man complained to the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) that afflictions had befallen him, so the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) told him, "When you arise say, 'In the Name of God for myself, my family, and my property'; otherwise, nothing will leave you." So the man said these words and the afflictions left him."<sup>41</sup>

Ibn as-Sunnī also transmitted the following: "Whosoever says when he arises, 'O God, verily, I arise because of Thee, blessed, in good health, and protected. So bestow upon me Thy blessings, Thy haleness, and Thy protection in this world and the next,' three times when it



becomes morning and when it becomes evening, will truly receive from God His blessings."<sup>42</sup>

Hadith: With respect to God's word (may He be mighty and exalted!), "And Abraham who fulfilled his obligations,"<sup>43</sup> Ali (may God be pleased with him!) transmitted this: "The Prophet (upon him be blessings and peace!) used to say when it became morning and when it became evening:

Glory be to God when ye enter the night and when ye enter the morning. Unto Him belongeth praise in the heavens and the earth! and at sunset and noonday He bringeth forth the living from the dead, and He bringeth forth the dead from the living, and He reviveth the earth after its death. And even so will ye be brought forth."<sup>44</sup>

Hadith: The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "Whosoever says when it becomes morning, 'Glory be to God when ye enter the night and when ye enter the morning, unto Him belongeth praise in the heavens and the earth'<sup>45</sup> (the entire verse), will make up for what escapes him that day and whosoever recites it when it becomes evening will make up for what escapes him that night."<sup>46</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever repeats three times when it becomes morning, 'I seek refuge from the accursed devil,' and recites three verses from the end of Sūrat al-Hashr,<sup>47</sup> seventy thousand angels will be assigned to him to pray for him until evening. If he should die that day, he dies a martyr, and if he says it when it becomes evening, he is of that rank."<sup>48</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says on Friday morning before the noon prayer, 'I ask forgiveness of God the Supreme than whom there is no divinity but He, the Living, the Eternal and unto Him I repent,' three times is forgiven his sins, even though they be like the foam on the sea."<sup>49</sup>

Hadith: In his al-Mu'jam al-Kabir, at-Ṭabarānī narrated that Abu'd-Dardā' said, "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, 'Whosoever asks God's blessings upon me ten times when it becomes morning and when it becomes evening obtains my intercession on the Day of Judgment.'"<sup>50</sup>

Hadith: In the collection of forty hadīths of Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ibn Nu'mān, he relates, "A narrative was transmitted on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, who said, 'The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "Blessings upon me is a light upon the path; whosoever asks blessings upon me on Fridays eighty times is forgiven the sins of eighty years."'<sup>51</sup>

Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ibn Nu'mān said, "Anas ibn Mālīk related that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said,

Whosoever asks blessings upon me every Friday one thousand times will not die before he sees his place in Paradise; and whosoever asks blessings upon me once, and this has been accepted from him, God effaces the sins of eighty years from him."<sup>52</sup>

Hadith: "Not a man leaves his house for prayer and says,

O God, verily I ask Thee by virtue of the right of those who can ask Thee and by virtue of this path of mine, verily, I do not go forth in insolence or arrogance or hypocrisy or good fame. I go forth in fear of Thy displeasure and seeking Thy contentment. I ask Thee to deliver me from hellfire and to forgive me my sins, for no one can forgive sins save Thee,

but God appoints for him seventy thousand angels who ask forgiveness for him and God (may He be mighty and exalted!) draws His face near to him until he finishes his prayer."<sup>53</sup>

Hadith: "When one of you enters the mosque or goes to the mosque, let him ask blessings upon the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) and say, 'O God, open the doors of Thy mercy to me'; and when he leaves, let him ask blessings upon the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!), and say, 'O God, protect me from the accursed devil.'"<sup>54</sup> Ibn Mukarram said in his version of the hadith, "O God, safeguard me."<sup>55</sup>

Hadith: "A supplication is not refused between the call to prayer and the formula just preceding the ritual prayer (iqāmah), so supplicate."<sup>56</sup>

Hadith: "He performed two short units of prayer<sup>57</sup> and I<sup>58</sup> heard him say three times while sitting, 'O God, the Lord of Gabriel and Isrā'īl and Michael and Muḥammad (may God bless him and grant him peace!), I seek refuge in Thee from hellfire.'"<sup>59</sup>

Hadith: "When the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) used to perform the morning prayer, he would say, 'O God, verily I ask of Thee beneficial knowledge, acceptable work, and a good sustenance.'"<sup>60</sup>

Hadith: "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) did not lead us in any prescribed prayer without turning his face toward us and saying,

O God, verily I seek refuge in Thee from every deed which would dishonor me, and I seek refuge in Thee from every companion who would ruin me, and I seek refuge in Thee from every hope which would distract me, and I seek refuge in Thee from poverty which would make me forget, and I seek refuge in Thee from all wealth which would make me intemperate."<sup>61</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever recites the opening chapter of the Qur'ān and the Verse of the Throne<sup>62</sup> and the two verses from Āl 'Imrān: 'God is

witness that there is no deity save Him, as do the angels,"<sup>63</sup> and 'Say: O God! Owner of Sovereignty!"<sup>64</sup> up to 'and Thou givest sustenance to whom Thou chooseth, without measure,"<sup>65</sup> then verily, they are a means of attachment; no veil exists between them and God (may He be mighty and exalted!).

"The verses said, 'Are we to be sent down to Thy earth and to whosoever disobeys Thee?'

"So God (may He be mighty and exalted!) answered,

Verily, I have sworn that no one amongst My servants shall recite thee at the end of each prayer but that I shall make Paradise his abode in accordance with his deeds, or I shall make him dwell in the Garden, or I shall look at him with My hidden eye seventy times every day, or I shall protect him from every enemy and deliver him."<sup>66</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says three times after the morning prayer and three times after the afternoon prayer, 'I ask forgiveness of God, the Supreme than whom there is no divinity but He, the Living, the Eternal, and unto Him I repent,' is forgiven his sins, even though they be as the foam of the sea."<sup>67</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says, 'Glory and praise be to God, the Supreme, there is no power or strength save in God, the Exalted, the Supreme' three times as soon as he finishes his prayer, rises forgiven."<sup>68</sup>

Hadith: "When you pray in the morning, say after the morning prayer, 'Glory and praise be to God, the Supreme, there is no power or strength save in God,' three times. God will safeguard you from four afflictions: from leprosy, the jinn, blindness, and semi-parelysis. This is in regard to your world here. As for your Hereafter, say, 'O

God, guide me Thyself and bestow upon me of Thy bounty, spread forth upon me of Thy mercy, and send down upon me Thy blessings."<sup>69</sup>

Then the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "If he has fulfilled them up to the Day of Judgment, never having abandoned them, they will assuredly open four gates of Paradise for him; he will be able to enter through whichever one he wants."<sup>70</sup>

Another account says, ". . . never having abandoned them out of dislike or forgetfulness, he will not come to any one of the gates of Paradise but that he will find it open."<sup>71</sup>

Hadith: "After saying the morning prayer, repeat seven times before speaking to anyone, 'O God, protect me from hellfire'; for truly, if you should die that very day, God records for you safety from hellfire."<sup>72</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever repeats after finishing his noon prayer, 'There is no divinity but God alone; He has no partner; His is the Kingdom, His is the praise; and He has power over everything,' ten times before speaking to anyone, God records through them ten good deeds for him, and through them erases ten bad ones, and through them raises him ten degrees; and they are for him the equal of ten breezes; and they are his guards against the devil and his protection against adversity; no sin will effect him on that day except polytheism (shirk). And whosoever repeats these words when he finishes saying the afternoon prayer is given the same protection that night."<sup>73</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says the morning prayer, then recites, 'Say: He is the God, the One!'<sup>74</sup> one hundred times before speaking, every time he says, 'Say: He is God, the One!' he is forgiven the sins of a year."<sup>75</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever prays at dawn, then sits invoking God (may He be mighty and exalted!) until the sun rises, Paradise is decreed for him."<sup>76</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever prays at dawn or in the early morning then sits at his place and does not speak nonsense about things of this world, but remembers God (may He be mighty and exalted!) to the point he has prayed four units, emerges from his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him."<sup>77</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever says in one of the marketplaces, 'There is no divinity but God alone; He has no partner; His is the Kingdom; His is the praise; He gives life and takes it; He is Alive and does not die; in His hand is all good; and He has power over everything,' one million good deeds are recorded for him and one million bad deeds are erased, and a house is built for him in Paradise."<sup>78</sup>

In another account: "Whosoever says, when he enters the marketplace,

There is no divinity but God alone; He has no partner; His is the Kingdom; His is the praise; He gives life and takes it; in His hand is all good; and He has power over everything; there is no divinity but God; God is Great; praise be to God, glory be to God; there is no power or strength save in God,

a million good deeds are recorded for him and a million bad ones are erased, and he is elevated one million degrees."<sup>79</sup>

If you ask, "For what reason should the reward of invocations be so great, given that they are so brief and easy on the tongue?" I respond, "Because of their constant repetitions; for verily, all of them refer to faith, which is the noblest of things; but God knows best."

Hadith: "He who first greets another with the salutation of peace is worthier in the sight of God (may He be mighty and exalted!) and His Messenger (may God bless him and grant him peace!)." <sup>80</sup>

Hadith: "He who greets a people excels them by ten good deeds."<sup>81</sup>

Hadith: "He who says, 'Peace be upon you (es-salāmu 'eleykum)' has ten good deeds recorded for him; and he who says, 'Peace be upon you and the mercy of God (as-selāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatu'llāh)' has twenty good deeds recorded for him; and he who says, 'Peace be upon you and the mercy of God and His graces (es-salāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatu'llēh wa berakātuh)' has thirty good deeds recorded for him."<sup>82</sup>

Hadith: "When something startled him, he would say, 'He is my Lord; He has no partner.'"<sup>83</sup>

Hadith: "O 'Alī! Shall I not teach you an expression to say when you fall into difficulty?" I said, "Why, of course, may God make me your ransom! How many good things you have taught me!"

He said, "When you fall into difficult straits, say, 'In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful; there is no power or strength save in God, the Exalted, the Supreme.' For verily, through these words God disposes of the various kinds of afflictions as He wills."<sup>84</sup>

Hadith: "When he feared a people, he would say, 'O God, verily we place Thee in our breasts, and we take refuge in Thee from their evil.'"<sup>85</sup>

Hadith: "We were with the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) on a raid and the enemy was encountered. Then I<sup>86</sup> heard him say, 'O sovereign of the Day of Judgment, Thee we worship and Thee we ask for help.' He continued, "Then I came across men flung down on earth while the angels were striking them in front and from behind."<sup>87</sup>

## Section [2]

### What to Say When Going on a Journey

Hadith: "Whosoever departs from his house, wishing to travel, should say when he leaves, 'I believe in God, I take refuge in God, I put my trust in God; there is no power or strength save in God.' Then God will bestow upon him the good of that departure and will avert from him the evil of that departure."<sup>88</sup>

Hadith: "When the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) traveled, he would say,

O God, Thou art the Companion of the sojourn and the deputy (khalifah) in the family. O God, accompany us on our journey and take our place in our family. O God, verily, I seek refuge in Thee from the hardships of travel and the sorrow of death, and from lean times after plenty, from the call of the tyrannized, and from the evil eye on one's family and wealth."<sup>89</sup>

Hadith: "When the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) traveled, riding his camel, he would say with his finger partially extended,

O God, Thou art the Companion on the journey and the deputy in the family. O God, remove the distance of the land for us and facilitate the journey for us. O God, I seek refuge in Thee from the hardships of traveling and the sorrow of death."<sup>90</sup>

Hadith: "Safety for my people from drowning when they ride on a boat is to say, 'In the Name of God be its course and its mooring. Verily, my Lord is forgiving and merciful;'<sup>91</sup> And they measure not the power of God in its true measure."<sup>92</sup>

Hadith: Abū Hureyrah transmitted, "Shall I not teach you something which the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) taught me to say upon leava-taking?" I<sup>93</sup> said, "Why, of course."

He said, "Say, 'I command you to the protection of God who does not neglect those who are entrusted to him.'"<sup>94</sup>

Hadith: Abū Hurayrah said, "Shall I not teach you an expression which the Messenger of God taught me? When you wish to travel or depart from a place, say to your family, 'I have commended you to the protection of God who does not fail those who are entrusted to Him.'"<sup>95</sup>

Hadith: "When an animal belonging to one of you escapes into the wilderness, call out three times, 'O servants of God, apprehend it!'"<sup>96</sup>

Hadith: "Yūnus ibn 'Ubeyd transmitted, "There is not a man who rides a difficult animal and says in its ear, 'Seek they other than the religion of God, when unto Him submitteth whosoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and unto Him they will be returned,'"<sup>97</sup> without its becoming humble to him by the permission of God."<sup>98</sup>

Hadith: "When the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) would say the morning prayer and I<sup>99</sup> did not know it, he would raise his voice, so that his Companions could hear, and say, except when traveling, 'O God, make my religion good for me, which Thou hast made as a protection for my affairs. O God, make my world good in which Thou has put my livelihood,' three times. 'O God, make my Hereafter good which Thou hast made my place of return,' three times. 'O God, I seek refuge in Thy contentment from Thy anger. O God, I seek refuge in Thee,' three times. 'There is no one who can restrain when Thou bestowest, and there is no one who can bestow when Thou restrainest, and the good luck of anyone will not avail against Thee.'"<sup>100</sup>

Hadith: "Verily, God (may He be mighty and exalted!) is a Friend who loves friendship. When you travel in a time of abundance, let your riding mounts have their fill of food, and do not go beyond the stopping-places on them; and when you travel in times of drought, then hurry. Make use of the end of the night. Verily, the earth is rolled up at night and if the desert demons seize you, then shout out the call to prayer. Beware of praying in the midst of main roads, for they are the crossings of predatory animals and the dwelling places of snakes."<sup>101</sup>

Hadith: "Verily the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) never saw a village which he wished to enter without saying upon seeing it,

O God, Lord of the Seven Heavens and what they shelter, Lord of the Seven Earths and what they contain, Lord of the devils and that which they lead astray, and Lord of the breezes and what they scatter, verily, we ask of Thee the best for this village and the best for its people, and we seek refuge in Thee from its evil and from the evil of its people and from the evil therein."<sup>102</sup>

Hadith: "Whosoever stops over at a place, then says, 'I take refuge in the perfect words of God from the evil which He hath created,' not a thing will harm him until he departs from that stopping-place of his."<sup>103</sup>

Hadith: Anas transmitted the following, "When we stopped at a place, we would glorify God until the saddlebags were unfestened." Shu bah said, "That is, we glorified God verbally."<sup>104</sup>

Hadith: "When he returned, he would say 'God is Great (Allāhu Akbar),' three times, then say,

There is no divinity but God alone; He has no partner; His is the Kingdom; His is the praise; and He has power over everything. We are those who are returning, worshipping, repenting, and prostrating ourselves to our Lord, and those who are praising. God has kept His promise and helped His servant and alone defeated the enemies."<sup>105</sup>

Hadīth: "When he went into his family, he would say, 'Repenting, repenting to our Lord, returning. He has not left a sin upon us.'"<sup>106</sup>

### Section [3]

Hadīth: One of the best ways of visiting the sick is to place your hand upon him and ask, "How was your morning?" or "How was your night?"<sup>107</sup>

Hadīth: "When you visit someone sick, console him during the visit, for verily, that will not restore anything of his health, but it will put him in good spirits."<sup>108</sup>

Hadīth: "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) went in to visit a sick man who was near death. So he greeted him and asked, 'How do you feel?' He answered, 'Fina, O Messenger of God, I long for God and I fear for my sins.' The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, 'The two will never join in the heart of a man in this world without God bestowing upon him his wish and protecting him from what he fears.'"<sup>109</sup>

Hadīth: "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) went in to visit a sick man and asked, 'Do you long for anything? Would you like some sweet bread?' He said, 'Yes!' So he requested some for him."<sup>110</sup>

Hadīth: "When he visited someone sick, he would say, 'Remove the injury, O Lord of Mankind. Heal, Thou art the Healer. There is no remedy except Thy remedy, a remedy that leaves no illness.'" Hammad used to say, "There is no remedy except Thy remedy."<sup>111</sup>

Hadīth: "There is not a Muslim who visits a sick man whose time has not yet come, and who says seven times, 'I ask of God, the Supreme Lord of the Supreme Throne, to heal you,' without the man's being restored to health."<sup>112</sup>

Hadīth: "Rub with your right hand seven times and say, 'I seek refuge in the might of God and His power from the evil that I find.'"<sup>113</sup> I did that and God Most High removed what was the matter with me; and I have not ceased instructing my family and others to do the same.

Hadīth: Abū Hureyrah said, "The Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) and I went out, his hand in mine or my hand in his, to visit a man of shabby appearance. The Prophet said, 'O so-and-so, what is it that I see that has happened to you?' He said, 'Sickness and harm, O Messenger of God.' He said, 'Shall I not teach you an expression which will remove harm and sickness from you?'"

Abū Hureyrah said, "Teach me, O Messenger of God." "Say, O Abū Hureyrah, 'I put my trust in the Living (al-ḥeyy) who does not die, and praise be to God who has not taken a son, who has no partner (sharīk) in the Kingdom, and who has no guardian over Him out of lowliness, and say God is Great.'"

So the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) went to the man, whose condition had improved and asked, "How so?" He answered, "I said the words, O Messenger of God. I have not forsaken the words which you have taught me."<sup>114</sup>

Hadīth: "When a man visits someone sick, let him say, 'O God, heal Thy servant so that he may either overcome an enemy for You or else he may go to pray to You.'"115

Hadīth: 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān related, "I became ill and the Messenger of God came to visit me one day and said, 'In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, I protect you by the words of God, the One, the Eternal who "begetteth not nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him"116 from the evil which you find.' Then when the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) rose to stand, he said, 'O 'Uthmān, seek protection with these words, for there is none like unto them for you with which to seek protection.'"117

Hadīth: "Verily, the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) used to teach his people to say for all their ailments and fever, 'In the name of God the Great, we seek refuge in God the Supreme from the evil of a gushing wound and from the evil of the heat of hellfire.'"118

Hadīth: Khawwēt ibn Jubayr related, "I became ill and the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) visited me, saying 'May your body be healed, O Khawwēt.' I said, 'And your body, O Messenger of God.' He said, 'Fulfill what you promised to God (may He be mighty and exalted!).' I said, 'I did not promise Him anything.' He said, 'Verily, you did! There is not a servant who becomes ill without offering some good to God (may He be mighty and exalted!). So fulfill the pledge which you made.'"119

Hadīth: "When misfortune befalls someone, let him remember his misfortune with Me, for it is the greatest of misfortunes."120

Hadīth: The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) said, "Moses said to his Lord, 'What is the recompense for one who consoles a

mother who has lost a child?' He answered, 'I shelter him in My Shade on the day when there is no shade but My Shade.'"121

Hadīth: "When some matter distresses you, pray to your Lord for proper guidance (istikhārah)122 therein seven times, then look to that which spontaneously comes to your heart; for the good lies therein."123

Hadīth: "When the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace!) had some matter in view, he would say, 'O God, choose for me and select for me.'"124

This is the conclusion of what we had wished to cite in this book in a concise manner; the door has now been opened to whosoever wishes to ponder thereon. For the best of speech is that which is concise and clear, not long and boring. Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds; prayers and blessings upon our master Muhammad, the opener (al-fātiḥ) and sealer (al-khātim),125 and upon his family and his Companions, the possessors of outstanding virtues and noble qualities. "God is sufficient for us! Most excellent is He in whom we trust."126

## Notes to the Introduction

<sup>1</sup> Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*, vol. II (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1949), p. 143; Gaorga Makdisi, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. I (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), p. 722; F. Wustanfald, *Geschichtschreiber der Araber und ihre Werke* (New York: Burt Franklin, n.d.), p. 154; 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. Ahmad ash-Sha'rānī, *at-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*, ed. by 'Abd al-Qādir Ahmad 'Atā' (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qāhirah, 1970), section 2, p. 19; Ibn al-Nayy b. Ahmad b. al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab fī Akhbār Man Dhahab*, vol. VI (Bairut: Al-Maktab at-Tijārī li t-Tibā'ah wa'n-Nashr wa't-Tawzī', n.d.), p. 19; 'Abd Allāh b. As'ad al-Yāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Janān wa 'Ibrat al-Yaqzān*, vol. IV, 2nd ed. (Bairut: Mu'assasat al-'Alamī, 1970), p. 246. Jalāl ad-Dīn 'Abd ar-Rahmān as-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Maḥāḍarah fī Tarīkh Miṣr wa'l-Qāhirah*, vol. I, ed. by Muḥammad 'Abu'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (N.P.: Dār Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah, n.d.), p. 524, gives the kunya Abu'l-'Abbās, whereas Ibrāhīm b. 'Alī b. Farḥūn, *Ad-Dibāj al-Mudhhab fī Ma'rifat A'yān 'Ulamā' al-Madhab*, vol. I, ed. by Muḥammad al-Aḥmadī Abu'n-Nūr (Cairo: Dār at-Turāth, 1972), p. 242, gives both Abu'l-'Abbās and Abu'l-Faḍl. Abu'l-Maḥāsīn Yūsuf b. Taghribirdī, *An-Nujūm az-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa'l-Qāhirah*, vol. VIII, p. 280, and Yūsuf b. Ismā'īl an-Nabhānī, *Jāmi' Kara-māt al-Awliyyā'*, vol. I, ed. by Ibrāhīm A. 'Awq (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1962), p. 525, refer to his nisbah of place as as-Sakandarī. Victor Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh: A Sufi of Mamlūk Egypt" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1970), p. 197, cites Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's full name according to Ahmad Zarrūq in an unpublished manuscript in the Escorial, No. 738, folio 9B, as Tāj ad-Dīn Tarjumān al-'Arifīn Abu'l-Faḍl Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm b. 'Abd ar-Rahmān b. 'Abd Allāh b. Ahmad b. 'Isā b. al-Husayn b. 'Atā' Allāh al-Judhāmī al-Mālikī al-Iskandarī al-Qarāfī as-Ṣūfī ash-Shādhilī.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Farḥūn, *ad-Dibāj*, vol. II, p. 43; as-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Maḥāḍarah*, vol. I, p. 456; Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Atā' Allāh, *Latā'if al-Minan*, ed. by 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd (Cairo: Ḥassān Publishers, 1974), p. 191, refers to taking his grandfather's place and gives Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī's comments about him. Abu'l-Wafā at-Taftazānī, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh as-Sakandarī wa Taṣawwufuh* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Angal al-Miṣriyyah, 1969), pp. 14-16.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, *Latā'if*, p. 141, mentions that when his father went to see Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī, he heard the shaykh say, "You have asked me a question for which I have no answer, but I see the answer written upon the inkwall, the mattress, and the wall." As-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Maḥāḍarah*, vol. I, p. 520; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 135. According to the *Latā'if*, p. 138, the full name of Shaykh Abu'l-Ḥasan is Taqī'd-Dīn Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Jabbār b. Tamīm b. Hurmuz b. Ḥatīm b. Qusayy b. Yūsuf b. Yusha' b. Ward b. Baṭṭāl b. Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Isā b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. Nowever, Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 118, gives the following preferred alternatives, based on al-Kattānī's *Salwat al-Anfās* (1898),

vol. I, pp. 84-85: Nūr ad-Dīn Abu'l-Ḥasan Ahmad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Ḥasanī al-Idrīsī al-Mi'mārī ash-Shādhilī az-Zarwilī, because Danner states, "His lineage goes back to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib through Ḥassan b. al-Ḥasan not through Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, as is sometimes given, for that Muḥammad had no offspring." Therefore, Danner says that "in his *Latā'if* . . . Ibn 'Atā' Allāh has the wrong descent also."

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Farḥūn, *ad-Dibāj*, vol. II, p. 242; as-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Maḥāḍarah*, vol. I, p. 524. Victor Danner, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh: The Book of Wisdom* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), pp. 19-20 (henceforth referred to as *The Book of Wisdom*).

<sup>5</sup> Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, vol. VI, pp. 4, 20; Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, *Latā'if*, p. 69; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 144-145, 200; Taftazānī, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh*, p. 21; Ibn Taghribirdī, *an-Nujūm az-Zāhirah*, vol. VIII, p. 198. His full name is Shihāb ad-Dīn Abu'l-Ma'ālī Ahmad b. Ishāq b. Muḥammad al-Mu'ayyad b. 'Alī b. Ismā'īl b. Abī Ṭālib al-Abarqūhī al-Ḥamadānī, an outstanding Qur'ān reciter and teacher and muḥaddith.

<sup>6</sup> The order was founded by Shihāb ad-Dīn 'Umar as-Suhrawardī (d. 630/1232).

<sup>7</sup> Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, vol. VI, p. 12; Ibn Taghribirdī, *an-Nujūm az-Zāhirah*, vol. VIII, p. 218, says he was learned in many disciplines. Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, *Latā'if*, p. 48; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 147-148, 200, Taftazānī, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh*, pp. 21-22. His full name is given as Sharaf ad-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Mu'min b. Khalaf b. Abī'l-Ḥasan b. Sharaf b. al-Khidr b. Mūsā ad-Dimyāṭī asb-Shāfi'ī. He studied the seven schools of Qur'ānic recitation and became an expert in the Qur'ān and ḥadīth. He wrote works not only on ḥadīth and fiqh but also on language and linguistics.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, p. 20; Ahmad b. 'Alī b. Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *ad-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. I, pp. 109-110, 292; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 148-149, 201. His full name is given as Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Muḥyi'd-Dīn al-Mārūnī Ḥafī Ra'sih al-Iskandarī. Taftazānī, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh*, p. 21, calls him al-Mazūnī.

<sup>9</sup> Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, vol. V, p. 381; as-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Maḥāḍarah*, vol. I, pp. 173-174; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 150-154, 201; Taftazānī, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh*, p. 20. His full name is given as Nāṣir ad-Dīn Abu'l-'Abbās Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr Maṣṣūr b. Abī l-Qāsim b. Mukhtār b. Abī Bakr 'Alī b. al-Munayyir al-Judhāmī al-Iskandarī al-Mālikī. He is mentioned in the *Latā'if*, p. 190, simply as Nāṣir ad-Dīn.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, vol. V, p. 421; as-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Maḥāḍarah*, vol. I, p. 289; Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, *Latā'if*, pp. 142, 175, 191, 224; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 158-159, 202. His full name is given as Makīn ad-Dīn al-Asmar 'Abd Allāh b. Maṣṣūr al-Iskandarī. He became one of the early masters of the Shādhilī order and also taught Qur'ānic recitation.



<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-'Imād, Shadharāt adh-Dhahab, vol. V, p. 406; al-Yāfi'ī, Mir'āt al-Janān, vol. IV, p. 208; Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī, Tabaqāt ash-Shāfi'iyyah al-Kubrā, vol. V, 1st ed. (Cairo: al-Maṭba'at al-Ḥusayniyyah al-Miṣriyyah, n.d.), p. 41; Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 178; Taftazānī, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, p. 22; Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," pp. 155-156, 201. His full name is given as Shams ad-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad b. 'Abbād al-Isfahānī. He authored several works such as Kitāb al-Qawā'id and Sharḥ al-Maḥsūl and is also said to have had a great influence on Arabic language and poetry.

<sup>12</sup> Other possible teachers include Ibn Daqīq al-'Id (d. 702/1302), a renowned Shāfi'ī faqīh and disciple of both Shaykh Abū'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī and Shaykh Abū'l-'Abbās al-Mursī; 'Abd al-Ghaffār b. Nūh (d. 708/1309), and Abū 'Abd Allāh b. an-Nu'mān (d. 607-683/1210-1285), both Mālikī authorities in their day.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 185.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 194; Yāfi'ī, Mir'āt al-Janān, vol. IV, p. 246; Ibn al-'Imād, Shadharāt adh-Dhahab, vol. VI, p. 20; Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," p. 24.

<sup>15</sup> There is no record that Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh ever met Shaykh Abū'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī. Since the latter died in 656/1258, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh would have been a young boy.

<sup>16</sup> Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 194; Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," pp. 23-24; Danner, Book of Wisdom, p. 23.

<sup>17</sup> Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 195.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 194; as-Suyūṭī, Ḥusn al-Maḥādarah, vol. I, p. 524; Ibn Farḥūn, ad-Dibāj, vol. I, p. 242; al-Yāfi'ī, Mir'āt al-Janān, vol. VI, p. 246; Ibn al-'Imād, Shadharāt adh-Dhahab, vol. VI, p. 20; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, ad-Durār al-Kāminah, vol. I, p. 291; Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," pp. 135-136; Danner, Book of Wisdom, p. 24; Sha'rānī, Tabaqāt al-Kubrā, p. 19, incorrectly states that Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh was the disciple of Shaykh Yaqūt al-'Arshī after the death of al-Mursī.

<sup>20</sup> Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 188.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 190.

<sup>24</sup> For his complete name, see note 9.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 190.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>27</sup> For an in-depth history of the Shādhilī order and its founder, see Victor Danner's unpublished dissertation, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh"; and 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd, Abū'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī (Cairo: Dār al-Katib al-'Arabī, 1967).

<sup>28</sup> Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 187: Shaykh Abū'l-'Abbās told one of his disciples to improve his ill-tampered nature because he had only one year to live, and according to Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, the man did indeed die a year later.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 170: "This Abū'l-'Abbās--since he penetrated to God, he has not been veiled and were he to ask for veiling, he would not find it."

<sup>30</sup> As-Suyūṭī, Ḥusn al-Maḥādarah, vol. I, p. 523; Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Latā'if, pp. 36, 164; Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," pp. 99 ff., 127; Nabḥānī, Karamāt al-Awliyā', vol. I, pp. 520-522, cites various miracles attributed to him; ash-Sharānī, Tabaqāt al-Kubrā, section 2, pp. 12 ff.

<sup>31</sup> As-Suyūṭī, op. cit., vol. I, p. 523; cf. Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Latā'if, pp. 168-171, 176 for Shaykh Abū'l-Ḥasan's praise of Shaykh Abū'l-'Abbās; ash-Sharānī, Tabaqāt al-Kubrā, section 2, p. 4; Nabḥānī, Karamāt al-Awliyā', vol. I, pp. 341-344, for various miracles attributed to Shaykh Abū'l-Ḥasan.

<sup>32</sup> That is, the spiritual axis of the religious community who is regarded as having preeminence over all other Sufi masters.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 178, describes the circumstances when Shaykh Abū'l-'Abbās began teaching as follows:

Shaykh Abū'l-Ḥasan was in Cairo with a group of his disciples and companions at the home of az-Zakī es-Sarrāj, studying the Kitāb al-Mawāfiq by an-Niffarī. Shaykh Abū'l-Ḥasan asked where Abū'l-'Abbās was. When he appeared, he said, "O my son, speak. O my son, speak. God bless you! Speak and you will never be silent after this ever!" So Shaykh Abū'l-'Abbās said, "At that moment I was given the tongue of a shaykh."

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 178-179, 186, for the proof of his qutbiyyah; see also p. 169, where Shaykh Abū'l-Ḥasan states, "O Abū'l-'Abbās, I did not take you as a disciple except in order for you to become me and I you."

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 20-21.

<sup>36</sup> That is, the Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names of God.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 197-198: He adds, "I heard that Shaykh Abū'l-Ḥasan said of him, 'Abū'l-'Abbās is more knowledgeable of the paths of heaven than he is of the paths of the earth.'"

38 *Ibid.*, p. 221.

39 See note 77; Ibn 'Atā' Allāh wrote the *Kitāb al-Hikam*, which consists of aphorisms of a profound metaphysical nature, and presented it to Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās who heartily approved it. Before the latter died in Alexandria, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh was already teaching in Cairo. Danner, *Book of Wisdom*, p. 24.

40 Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, vol. VI, p. 19, called him the spokesman of Sufism in his day, who also preached at the Azhar Mosque. He also cites the Shāfi'ī Shams ad-Dīn adh-Dhahabī (d. 749/1348), who says that Ibn 'Atā' Allāh spoke in a manner that would revive the spirit. The Shāfi'ī as-Subkī, *Tabaqāt ash-Shāfi'ī*, vol. V, p. 176, mentions his wondrous words; as-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Mahādarah*, vol. I, p. 524; al-Yāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jannān*, vol. IV, p. 246, calls him "the imām of both paths"; Ibn Taghribirdī, *an-Nujūm az-Zāhirah*, vol. VIII, p. 280, mentions his eloquent public sermons; Ibn Farḥūn, *ad-Dibāj*, p. 242, calls him "the wonder of his time" in discussing Sufism; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *ad-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. I, p. 291, also cites him as the spokesman for Sufism in his day and mentions his well-attended public sermons at the Azhar.

41 Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, vol. VI, p. 19 and Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *ad-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. I, p. 292 both cite adh-Dhahabī.

42 Nabhānī, *Karamāt al-Awliyā'*, vol. I, p. 525.

43 *Ibid.*, pp. 525-526.

44 Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, vol. VI, p. 20; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *ad-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. I, p. 292, quoting adh-Dhahabī.

45 Ismā'īl b. 'Umar b. Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa'n-Nihāyah*, vol. XIV (Cairo: Maṭba'at as-Sa'adah, n.d.), p. 45; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, vol. VI, p. 19; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *ad-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. I, p. 291; G. Makdisi, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," *E.I.*, III, p. 723; Danner, *Book of Wisdom*, p. 25.

46 Makdisi, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," *E.I.*, I, p. 722, and Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arab. Lit.*, vol. II, p. 143, give the date as 16 Jumada II 709/21 November 1309, whereas as-Suyūṭī *Husn al-Mahādarah*, vol. I, p. 524, lists 13 Jumada II 709; Taftazānī, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh*, p. 35.

47 as-Subkī, *Tabaqāt ash-Shāfi'ī*, vol. V, p. 176; as-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Mahādarah*, vol. I, p. 524; Ibn Farḥūn, *ad-Dibāj*, vol. I, p. 243; al-Yāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jannān*, vol. IV, p. 246; Nabhānī, *Karamāt al-Awliyā'*, vol. I, p. 525, says "near the Banu Wafā"; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *ad-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. I, p. 291; Ibn al-'Imād, *Husn al-Mahādarah*, vol. VI, p. 20; Ibn Taghribirdī, *an-Nujūm az-Zāhirah*, vol. VIII, p. 280, says "throngs attended his funeral procession."

48 As for example, the aforementioned miracle at his tomb, p. 8.

49 Cf. note 47.

50 Cf. note 40.

51 as-Subkī, *Tabaqāt ash-Shāfi'ī*, vol. V, p. 176; Tāj ad-Dīn (d. 771/1369) as-Subkī was a Shāfi'ī and his father Taqī d-Dīn (d. 756/1355) was a Shāfi'ī qāḍī and one of the most famous religious scholars of his day. He was also a student of Ibn 'Atā' Allāh. Cf. next paragraph. Makdisi, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," *E.I.*, I, p. 723.

52 Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *ad-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. I, p. 292.

53 as-Subkī, *Tabaqāt ash-Shāfi'ī*, vol. V, p. 176; as-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-Mahādarah*, vol. I, p. 524; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *ad-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. I, p. 292, adds that he himself studied under Sarah bint as-Subkī who related remarks from her father regarding Shaykh Ibn 'Atā' Allāh; Taftazānī, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh*, p. 26.

54 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, *Lata'if*, pp. 175, 224-257 et *passim*. See above, p. 3.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 316.

56 His full name is Sharaf ad-Dīn Abū Sulaymān Dā'ūd b. 'Umar b. Ibrāhīm al-Iskandarī ash-Shādhilī. He was known to his followers as Dā'ūd al-Bākhilī, and other variations include Ibn Bākhilā and Dā'ūd b. Mākhilā. Ahmad al-'Alawī, *Kitāb Qawl al-Maqbūl* (al-Jazīrah: Maṭba'at an-Nahḍah, n.d.), p. 41; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 288-291, 329; al-Yāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jannān*, vol. IV, p. 144; Taftazānī, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh*, pp. 27-28, calls him Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's khalīfah; al-Ḥasan b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, *Irshād ar-Rāghibīn*, pp. 42 ff. in Muhammad Zāfir al-Madanī's *al-Anwār al-Qudsiyyah* (Istanbul: n.p., 1302/1884); Martin Lings, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century: Shaikh Ahmad al-'Alawī* (2nd ed.; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 233; Sha'rānī, *Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*, section 1, p. 163 ff., refers to him as Dā'ūd b. Mākhilā. See Appendix, pp. 273-274 for a Shādhilī *silsilah* from which the 'Alawī branch claims its spiritual lineage.

57 al-Yāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jannān*, vol. III, p. 329; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 285-288, 326, gives his full name as Shihāb ad-Dīn Abū l-'Abbās Ahmad b. Maylaq ash-Shādhilī; Taftazānī, *Ibn 'Atā' Allāh*, p. 28.

58 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, *Lata'if*, p. 37; ash-Sha'rānī, *Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*, section 2, p. 12.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 37; ash-Sha'rānī, *Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*, section 2, p. 12.

60 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, *Lata'if*, pp. 19-20.

61 See Appendix for al-Ghazālī, p. 262.

62 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, *Lata'if*, p. 180: He was highly extolled by both shaykhs. See Appendix for al-Tirmidhī, p. 266.

63 See Appendix for al-Qāḍī 'Iyād, p. 267.

64 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Latā'if, pp. 179-180: "Sheykh Abu'l-Ḥasan used to say that the Ihyā' bestowed upon you knowledge and the Qūt bestowed upon you light."

65 Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 103.

66 Ibid., p. 104.

67 Ibid., p. 319.

68 Other editions of the Latā'if give the full title as Kitāb Latā'if al-Minan fī Menāqib Abī'l-Abbās al-Mursī wa Shaykhīh Abī'l-Ḥasan.

69 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 316, refers to his counseling of the Sultān al-Mālik al-Manṣūr Lājīn followed by the phrase rahimahu'l-lāh, which indicates that he was already dead as of that writing. The sultan died in 697/1298, so the Latā'if was therefore composed sometime thereafter. Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 277, suggests that the Latā'if might have been written between 1307 and 1308 after his confrontation with Ibn Taymiyyah. Furthermore, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh mentions both his Kitāb al-Hikem in the Latā'if (p. 290) and his Kitāb et-Tanwīr (p. 277), indicating that the Latā'if was written after these two books.

70 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Traite sur le nom Allāh, trans. by Maurice Gloton (Paris: Les Oeuvres, 1981), p. 17.

71 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Latā'if, pp. 36-37.

72 Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 104; al-Yāfi'ī, Mir'āt al-Janān, vol. IV, p. 246; Ibn al-Imād, Shadherāt adh-Dhehab, vol. VI, p. 20.

73 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 366; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 320.

74 Taftazānī, p. 105.

75 Ibid., p. 105; Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 320.

76 Those biographers mentioning Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's works include Ibn Farḥūn, ed-Dibāj, vol. I, p. 242; al-Nebhānī, Keremāt al-Awliyā', vol. I, p. 525; as-Suyūṭī, Ḥusn al-Menādirah, vol. I, p. 524; Ibn al-Imād, Shadherāt adh-Dhehab, vol. VI, p. 20; as-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi'ī, vol. V, p. 176; ash-Shāf'ī, Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā, section 2, p. 19.

77 Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, pp. 79-80, cites Ḥajjī Khalīfah in his Kashf adh-Dhunūn, vol. III, p. 82, who quotes Sheykh Abu'l-Abbās al-Mursī, as saying upon being presented with a copy of the Hikem, "My son, you have achieved the aim of the Ihyā' in this book and more." Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 277, 300-301; Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Traite sur le nom Allāh, trans. by Gloton, p. 13.

78 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Latā'if, p. 290; Idem, Kitāb at-Tanwīr fī Isqāṭ at-Tadbīr (Cairo: Matba'at Muḥammad 'Alī Subayh, 1390/1970), p. 92; Idem, Tāj al-'Arūs al-Hāwī li-Tahdhīb an-Nufūs on the margin of Kitāb at-Tanwīr (Cairo: Matba'at al-Ḥamīdiyyah al-Miṣriyyah, 1321 A.H.), p. 66. Both Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 331, and Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 79, cite Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's Unwān at-Tawfīq as containing passages from the Hikam as well.

79 Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 300-301.

80 In his Book of Wisdom, Danner divides the Hikam into twenty-five chapters of 262 aphorisms, four treatises, and thirty-four intimate discourses. Paul Nwyie in his Ibn 'Atā' Allāh (m. 709/1309) et la naissance de confrérie Sedilite (Beyrouth: Dār el-Mechreq, 1972), pp. 84-229, numbers the aphorisms differently and divides the work into thirty chapters of 240 maxims, four extracts of letters, and thirty-five colloquies.

81 Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 302.

82 See Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, pp. 89-96, for a list of over twenty-five commentaries on the Hikam from the first/eighth century to the early fourteenth/twentieth century, including ones in Turkish and Malaysian. Taftazānī, pp. 1-2, 84, considers the Hikam to be Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's most important and most outstanding work and all his other works merely a commentary or explanation of it.

83 See Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 92, for Ahmad Zarrūq's lofty praise of ar-Rundī's Sharh. Miguel Asín Pelacios, St. John of the Cross and Islam (New York: Vantage Press, 1981), pp. x, 28-31, views Ibn 'Abbād ar-Rundī as the Muslim forerunner of St. John of the Cross based on ar-Rundī's Sharh of the Hikam and its Shādhilī mystical doctrines on renunciation. Zakī Mubārak, at-Tasawwuf al-Islāmī fī'l-Adab wa'l-Akhlāq (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1373/1954), pp. 136-137, states that the two most famous commentaries are by ar-Rundī and 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥijāzī ash-Sharqāwī (d. 1227/1812) entitled al-Minab al-Qudsiyyah 'ala'l-Hikam al-'Atā'iyyah. However, Zarrūq's commentaries have become increasingly popular over the years. A. J. Arberry, Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1979), p. 87.

84 Ahmed b. Ajībah, 'Iqāz al-Himmam fī Sharh al-Hikam (Cairo: 'Abd el-Ḥamīd Ahmad Hanafī, n.d.), pp. 3-4; Danner "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 304; Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 88; Jean-Louis Micron, Le Soufi Marocain Ahmad Ibn 'Ajībah et Son Mi'raj (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1973), pp. 32-33, 36.

85 Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 88; Nwyie, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 38, states that the spread and popularity of the Hikam are precisely due to its conformity to the Sunnah. Even Ibn al-Imād, Shadherāt adh-Dhehab, vol. VI, p. 19, comments that Ibn 'Atā' Allāh combined the teachings of the Sufis with those of the early patriarchs (salaf) and the legal sciences.

86 Mubārak, at-Tasawwuf al-Islāmī, p. 136; Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 89.

- 87 Asin Palacios, St. John of the Cross, p. 30.
- 88 For axampias, see nota 80.
- 89 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Kitāb at-Tanwīr, p. 13.
- 90 Ibid., p. 92, is ona axample.
- 91 Ibid., pp. 93-94, 108.
- 92 Ibid., p. 88. Tha same formula follows tha nama of Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī (p. 110).
- 93 Brockalman, Gaschichte der Arab. Lit., vol. II, p. 143; Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 101.
- 94 Brockalman, Gaschichta dar Arab. Lit., vol. II, p. 143; Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 101.
- 95 Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Abbād ar-Rundī, ar-Rasā'il as-Ṣuḡhrā, ed. by Paul Nwyia (Bayrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1958), p. 97.
- 96 Danner "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 311; Ibn 'Ajībāh, Iqāz al-Himam, p. 9, comments that both the Tanwīr and the Latā'if are a kind of sharh of tha Hikam.
- 97 It is also known as al-Qawl al-Mujarrad fi'l-Ism al-Mufrad. See Ibn 'Ajībāh, Iqāz al-Himam, p. 9.
- 98 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, al-Qasd al-Mujarrad fi Ma'rifat al-Ism al-Mufrad (London: British Museum manuscript, cat. no. 14519. b. 85), p. 12.
- 99 Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," pp. 305-306.
- 100 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, al-Qasd al-Mujarrad, p. 13, citas their quoting of Q. 19:65: "Knowest thou one that can be named along with Him?" as one proof givan against an etymological source. For an axpanded discussion, see Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Traite sur le nom Allāh, trans. by Gloton, pp. 34-35.
- 101 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, al-Qasd al-Mujarrad, p. 15; thesa include baing derived from al-walāh, al-ilāh, al-hajb, al-'uluw, and al-baqā'.
- 102 Ibid., p. 23.
- 103 Ibid., pp. 19-20.
- 104 Ibid., pp. 29-33, 40-43 ff. Although Shaykh Ibn 'Atā' Allāh divides the Ninety-Nine Names according to Names of Essence, Action, etc., nevertheless, he says that none of them can be ranked as first or last nor are they conditioned by time or limits (p. 40).
- 105 Ibid., p. 14.

- 106 Danner, "Ibn 'Atā' Allāh," p. 333.
- 107 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, Traite sur le nom Allāh, trans. by Gloton, p. 22.
- 108 Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 107.
- 109 Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, al-Qasd al-Mujarrad, p. 76. Cf. Latā'if, p. 196.
- 110 Ibid., pp. 5-6, 68-69. Cf. Miftāh al-Falāh wa Miṣbāḥ al-Arwāḥ (Cairo: Maṭba'ah Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1381/1961), pp. 13-14.
- 111 See note 70 on Gloton's annotated translation.
- 112 It is also known as Tāj al-'Arūs wa Qam' an-Nufūs in Brockelmann, Gaschichte der Arab. Lit., vol. II, p. 144.
- 113 See note 78. Taftazānī, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh, p. 107, points out that the work is also antitled an-Nubdhah fi't-Taṣawwuf in the Dār al-Kutub listings (No. 4136) or at-Tuhfah fi't-Taṣawwuf, tha latter Brockalman, Gaschichte der Arab. Lit., vol. II, p. 143, mistakenly lists as a separate work. In fact, on p. 144, Brockelmann gives another listing for a manuscript entitlad Uns al-'Arūs, which is no doubt the sama work. Taftazānī also notes that Brockelmann's listing of a work callad at-Tarīq al-Jaddah ilā Nayl as-Sa'ādah is actually part of the Tuhfah fi't-Taṣawwuf.
- For an in-depth study of Ibn 'Atā' Allāh's works to data, see Taftazānī, pp. 112 ff. Besides the books previously cited are the following treatises which he lists, annotates, and gives location of when appropriate. Several of these are also mentioned by Brockelmann.
- 1) Risālah on Qur'ān 6:54; manuscript in Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah #81.
  - 2) Qasā'id (poams); Berlin Library #7846.
  - 3) Al-Muraqqa ila'l-Quds al-Abqā'--lost work on fiqh; mentioned by as-Suyūṭī (cf. note 125) and by Muḥammad b. Chanab in his Étude sur les personnages mentionnés dans L'Idjazza du Cheikh Abdel Qadir El Fasy, p. 341, note 17 and p. 358.
  - 4) Mukṭaṣar Tahdhīb al-Mudawwanah li'l-Barādi'--on Māliki fiqh; also citad by as-Suyūṭī and Chanab, but Taftazānī, p. 113, says he could not find any copy.
  - 5) Risālah fi'l-Qawā'id ad-Dīniyyah--on religious precepts and maxims; manuacript in British Museum #2372.
  - 6) Sermons; handwritten text in Paris Library #1299.

- 7) Hizb an-Najāt; manuscript in Rabat Library #306.
- 8) Risālah Taṣawwuf; manuscript in Aṣif Library #105, 368, 1.
- 9) Tanbih fī Tarīq al-Qawm, manuscript in Maktabat az-Zaytūnah in Tunis #1882, 168, III.
- 10) Risālah fī's-Sulūk; copy in Maktabah Rambur #144, 341, 1
- 11) Hizb an-Nūr wa Tamām as-Surūr; manuscript in Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah #214 taṣawwuf, 2150 taṣawwuf, and 1598 taṣawwuf.
- 12) Du'ā; copy in Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah #1632 taṣawwuf.
- 13) Tuhfat al-Khullān fī Sharḥ Naṣīhat al-Ikhwān; copy #1401 taṣawwuf was in Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah but "it is as good as lost and until now we have not come across another copy" (p. 115).
- 114 Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Tāj al-'Arūs, p. 24.
- 115 Ibid., p. 94.
- 116 Ibn 'Ajībah, Iqāz al-Himam, p. 9.
- 117 Taftazānī, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, p. 106.
- 118 Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," p. 311; Danner adds that "Taqī'd-Dīn as-Subkī (d. 756/1355), his disciple, transmitted [it] to others, and [it] has always had a certain currency in Sufic circles."
- 119 Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, 'Unwān at-Tawfīq fī Ādāb at-Tarīq, Sharḥ Qasīdah Shaykh ash-Shuyūkh Abī Madyan Shu'ayb al-Maghribī (Damascus: Maṭba'at al-Iḥsān, n.d.). The Takhmīs of Muḥyi d-Dīn b. al-'Arabī is also included. Taftazānī, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, p. 111, states that the 'Unwān is mentioned only by al-Ḥajj al-Kawhīn in his Tabaqāt ash-Shād-hīliyyah, p. 99.
- 120 Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, 'Unwān, p. 25. Cf. Taftazānī, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, p. 111.
- 121 Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, 'Unwān, pp. 20-21.
- 122 Ibid., pp. 19, 25.
- 123 Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," p. 323.
- 124 Brockelmann, Geschichte der Arab. Lit., vol. II, pp. 143-144.
- 125 Cf. as-Suyūṭī, Ḥusn al-Maḥādarah, vol. I, p. 424, who mentions two unknown works, al-Muraqqā ilā'l-Quds al-Abqā and Mukhtaṣar Tahdhīb

al-Mudawwanah li'l-Barādī in addition to the Tanwīr, Latā'if, and Hikam.

126 Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," p. 324. Cf. note 113.

127 Ibn Taghribirdī, an-Nujūm az-Zāhirah, vol. VIII, p. 280, states that Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh had very fine mystical poetry and gives the beginning lines of one of them; Ibn al-'Imād, Shadharāt adh-Dhahab, vol. VI, p. 20, says that Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's shaykh al-Mursī often used to ask him to repeat the following verse:

كَمْ مِنْ قُلُوبٍ قَدْ أُبْتَتَ بِالْهَوَى  
أُفٍّ بِهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَمَامَا

("How many the hearts that by love have been mortified  
I live by them after he [al-Mursī] by love had them revived.")

128 Taftazānī, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, p. 111, states that it is also known by the title Miftāh al-Falāh fī Dhikr Allāh al-Karīm al-Fattāh, according to Ḥajjī Khalīfah in Kashf az-Zunūn, vol. II, 1869.

129 Since this passage of not quite two pages in length was not part of the body of the work, it was omitted from the translation.

130 Miftāh al-Falāh wa Miḡbāh al-Ārwāh (Cairo: Maṭba'ah Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1381/1961), p. 4. Although uṣūl is normally translated as "principles," its use in the singular made the term "foundation" seem more appropriate as a heading.

131 Not to be confused with al-qism ath-thānī, which is translated as Part II.

132 Cf. previous discussion, pp. 18 ff.

133 Miftāh al-Falāh, p. 3.

134 Ibid., pp. 3-4.

135 Ibid., p. 4. Dhikr in its totality of meaning signifies not only invoking God's Name repeatedly and the Sufi ceremony of so doing but also any sort of mention of Him or a formula containing His Name or inward concentration on God.

136 Ibid., pp. 6-8. The sounds described that one hears while invoking, such as the rippling of water or the sound of the wind, actually refer to spiritual states descending upon one who is totally absorbed in invoking God through His Name and is oblivious to all else.

137 Cf. Ibid., pp. 48 ff., where Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh returns to the procedure for invoking and gives further elaboration.

138 Ibid., pp. 31, 32.

139 Ibid., p. 44.

140 Ibid., p. 47.

[Part One]

<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān 12:108.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān 1:2.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān 37:35.

<sup>4</sup> This is the tekbīr which is used in the call to prayer.

<sup>5</sup> A formula derived from the Sunnah of the Prophet.

<sup>6</sup> Qur'ān 2:286.

<sup>7</sup> This is another formula based on the Sunnah.

<sup>8</sup> Qur'ān 24:35. The first sentence is taken verbatim from Najm ad-Dīn al-Kubrā's Fawā'id al-Jamāl wa Fawā'id al-Jalāl, p. 4, and the rest of the paragraph is a paraphrase of the same. Cf. above, note. 153.

<sup>9</sup> In other words, as on the Day of Judgment.

<sup>10</sup> Qur'ān 37:99.

<sup>11</sup> Tirmidhī, 45:87 (nos. 3576 and 3577, with slight differences). References to hadīths will be made in accordance with the system adopted by A. J. Wensinck in his Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition. Thus, the collections of hadīths, such as the Ṣaḥīḥ of Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, the Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī, the Sunan of Muḥammad ibn 'Isā at-Tirmidhī, the Sunan of Abū Dā'ūd as-Sijistānī, the Muwatta' of Mālik ibn Anas, the Amāl al-Yawm wa 'l-Laylah of Abū Bakr Ibn as-Sunnī, the Jāmi' as-Saghir of Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī, and the Hilyat al-Awliyā' of Abū Nu'aym al-Isfahānī will be referred to respectively as Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī, Abu Dā'ūd, Mālik, Ibn as-Sunnī, Suyūṭī, and Abū Nu'aym each name followed, first, by the number of the book (kitāb), then that of the chapter (bāb), and finally the number of the hadīth itself within the edited work; but in Ibn as-Sunnī's collection, his name will be followed only by the number of the hadīth as no other division exists in his work. Full bibliographical data on the editions of the hadīth-collections used will be given, of course, in the bibliography. Lastly, only those hadīths that have been actually verified are cited in the footnotes.

<sup>12</sup> Qur'ān 13:28.

<sup>13</sup> Qur'ān 24:35.

<sup>141</sup> See Appendix for al-Junayd, p. 264.

<sup>142</sup> See Appendix for al-Ghazālī, p. 262.

<sup>143</sup> Miftāh al-Falāh, p. 56.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>149</sup> See above, pp. 18-20.

<sup>150</sup> Miftāh al-Falāh, p. 110.

<sup>151</sup> Taftazānī, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, p. 108.

<sup>152</sup> Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," p. 310. For Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's confrontation with Taqī'd-Dīn b. Taymiyyah, see Ibn al-'Imād, Shadharāt adh-Dhahab, vol. VI, p. 19.

<sup>153</sup> Najm ad-Dīn al-Kubrā, Fawā'id al-Jamāl wa Fawā'id al-Jalāl, ed. by Fritz Meier (Weisbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1957), pp. 2, 4, 14, 21-25.

<sup>154</sup> Danner, "Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh," p. 308.

<sup>155</sup> Taftazānī, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, pp. 37-38.

<sup>156</sup> Asin Palacios, St. John of the Cross, pp. ix-x, believes that St. John of the Cross was influenced by Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh through Ibn 'Abbād ar-Rundī's commentary on the Hikem. Taftazānī, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, pp. 1-2, concurs.

<sup>157</sup> For examples of twentieth-century studies, see Danner, Book of Wisdom and "Ibn Aṭā' Allāh"; Gloton, Traité sur le nom Allāh; Mahmūd, Abu'l-Hasan ash-Shādhilī; Michon, Le Soufi Marocain; Mubārak, at-Taḥawwuf al-Islāmī; Nwyia, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh; Taftazānī, Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh; Asin Palacios, St. John of the Cross and "Sadilíes y alumbrados," Al-Andalus, IX-XVI (1944-1951); Luce Lopez Barault, San Juan de la Cruz y el-Islam (Recinto de Río Piedras: El Colegio de México, A.C., 1985).

<sup>158</sup> For an in-depth study, see Lings, A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century.

- 14 Qur'ān 75:1-2.
- 15 Qur'ān 40:15.
- 16 Qur'ān 89:27-30.
- 17 Qur'ān 33:41-42.
- 18 Qur'ān 3:191.
- 19 Qur'ān 33:35.
- 20 Qur'ān 2:152.
- 21 Qur'ān 13:28.
- 22 Qur'ān 3:41.
- 23 Qur'ān 76:25.
- 24 Muslim, 48:11 (no. 2701).
- 25 Tirmidhī, 45:7 (no. 3438, with slight differences).
- 26 Muslim, 48:11 (no. 2700).
- 27 Muslim, 6:36 (nos. 240 and 241, with slight differences).
- 28 Qur'ān 2:248.
- 29 Muslim 48:1 (no. 2676).

30 Tirmidhī, 45:12 (no. 3666). The word al-mustahtarūn is derived from the passive voice of Form X of the verb, ustuhtira, "to be devoted, infatuated with something." Form VIII of the passive voice of the verb, uhtira, which is inexplicably used later in the text, means the same as Form X. Both verbs also carry the sense of being negligent and thoughtless.

- 31 Bukhārī, 80:65 (no. 6024).
- 32 Tirmidhī, 45:87 (no. 3577).
- 33 Tirmidhī, 45:10 (no. 3660).
- 34 Suyūṭī, II, 18.
- 35 Suyūṭī, II, 19.
- 36 Mālik, 15:7 (no. 24).
- 37 Tirmidhī, 45:5 (no. 3436).
- 38 Muslim, 6:29 (no. 211).

- 39 Bukhārī, 80:68 (no. 6023).
- 40 Bukhārī, 97:15 (no. 6956).
- 41 Tirmidhī, 45:100 (no. 3597).
- 42 Tirmidhī, 45:119 (no. 3632).
- 43 Tirmidhī, 45:4 (no. 3435).
- 44 Tirmidhī, 45:9 (no. 3444).

#### Chapter I

- 1 Tirmidhī, 45:36 (no. 3488).
- 2 Tirmidhī, 45:36 (no. 3489).
- 3 Ibn as-Sunnī (nos. 181 and 182 , with slight differences).
- 4 Tirmidhī, 45:12 (no. 3673, with slight differences).
- 5 Qur'ān 2:74.
- 6 Qur'ān 43:36-37.
- 7 Abū Dā'ūd, 35:31 (no. 4856).
- 8 Tirmidhī, 45:8 (no. 3440).
- 9 Abū Oā'ūd, 35:31 (no. 4855).
- 10 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 3.
- 11 Qur'ān 39:45.
- 12 Qur'ān 99:7-8.
- 13 Tirmidhī, 44:19 (no. 5161, with slight differences).

14 In the beginning sentence to this section, the author mentions the rules "associated with" the invocation as being third in sequence, not second, as they are here.

- 15 Qur'ān 25:43.
- 16 Qur'ān 17:22.
- 17 Qur'ān 36:60.



## Chapter II

<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān 11:114.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 59 and 239, notes 1, 4, and 3, for references to these formulas.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān 2:152.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān 49:13.

## Chapter IV

<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān 2:26.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān 2:27.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān 94:4; the verse addresses the Prophet.

<sup>4</sup> The preceding material probably relates to the "first invocation"; otherwise, no mention was made of a first one, although the author will mention a number of other invocations in due course.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'ān 47:19

<sup>6</sup> Mālik, 15:8 (no. 32).

<sup>7</sup> Plural of ghayr, in the sense of "other-than-God."

<sup>8</sup> Mālik, 15:8 (no. 32).

<sup>9</sup> Qur'ān 6:91.

<sup>10</sup> Qur'ān 6:91.

<sup>11</sup> Qur'ān 6:91.

<sup>12</sup> Hū in pausal form.

<sup>13</sup> During the act of bowing (rukū'), the worshipper repeats a certain short formula three times, which is an invocation in the sense that it is both short and repetitive, while the act of bowing itself adds a self-effacing element to the whole.

## Chapter V

<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān 3:18.

<sup>2</sup> The invocation of Lā ilāha illa' llāh is what is meant by this.

<sup>3</sup> Because these two last-named deeds detract from one's concentration on God and remove all trust in Him from the soul.

## Chapter VI

<sup>1</sup> Because mankind is created in the image of God.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān 2:268.

## Chapter VII

<sup>1</sup> Although the author previously stated that there were two coverings, he now goes on to mention a third, which is actually the kernel or essence itself.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān 25:43.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān 13:15.

## Chapter VIII

<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān 17:44.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān 29:69.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān 7:55.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān 79:40.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'ān 39:54.

<sup>6</sup> Qur'ān 8:46.

<sup>7</sup> Qur'ān 16:114.

<sup>8</sup> Qur'ān 68:48.

<sup>9</sup> The source for this hadith, which continues on to the end of the next paragraph, is Muslim 6:37 (no. 243).

<sup>10</sup> Both the Verse of the Throne (2:255) and in Sūrat Āl 'Imrān (3:2) contain the formula Allāh Lā ilāha illa Huwa'l-Hayyu l-Qayyūm ("Allāh, there is no divinity but He, the Living, the Self-Subsistent").

<sup>11</sup> Al-Hayy ("the Living") and al-Qayyūm ("the Self-Subsistent").

<sup>12</sup> Mālik, 15:8 (no. 32).

<sup>13</sup> Mālik, 15:8 (no. 32).

<sup>14</sup> Both absence and presence are in relation to God, i.e., absence from God and presence with God.

<sup>15</sup> Qur'ān 9:114.



<sup>16</sup> Qur'ān 58:22.

<sup>17</sup> Abū Nu'aym, I, 4 (with slight differences).

<sup>18</sup> Because his outward state manifests the Divine Name "the Outward."

<sup>19</sup> Qur'ān 6:149.

<sup>20</sup> Since everything is predestined, vying with the world is illusion.

<sup>21</sup> Qur'ān 2:247.

#### Chapter IX

<sup>1</sup> Mubāh ("indifferent action") in Islamic law refers to a deed which is permissible but brings neither reward nor punishment.

<sup>2</sup> In the past, the patched frock (muragga'ah or khirqah) was sometimes given to a disciple by the shaykh at the beginning of the path. Here it means spiritual death of the ego.

<sup>3</sup> That is, while they were ritually pure, since a Muslim must have performed his ablution before praying.

#### Part Two

<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān 2:163.

<sup>2</sup> In Arabic, Lā ilāha illa 'llāh is the pausal form of illa 'llāhu, the final word being really Allāhu when pronounced fully and without regard to the preceding word illā.

<sup>3</sup> These twin stars of Ursa Minor were used for desert travel.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'ān 21:22.

<sup>5</sup> The sense of this statement is that istithnā' is derived from one of the original meanings of thanā, a Form I simple verb.

<sup>6</sup> Qur'ān 43:87.

<sup>7</sup> In Arabic, the word ilāha is in the accusative case following the lā that negates the species absolutely.

<sup>8</sup> This refers to the formula said before reading the Qur'ān: a'ūdhu bi'llāhi min ash-shaytān ar-rajīm ("I seek refuge in God from the accursed devil").

<sup>9</sup> Qur'ān 51:50.

<sup>10</sup> Qur'ān 6:91.

<sup>11</sup> Qur'ān 21:22

<sup>12</sup> Muslim, 1:8 (no. 21).

<sup>13</sup> The first condition is declaring Lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

<sup>14</sup> Qur'ān 2:163.

<sup>15</sup> Qur'ān 112:1.

<sup>16</sup> Qur'ān 16:51.

<sup>17</sup> Qur'ān 57:3.

<sup>18</sup> Qur'ān 6:59.

<sup>19</sup> Qur'ān 28:88.

<sup>20</sup> Qur'ān 6:17.

<sup>21</sup> Qur'ān 6:76.

<sup>22</sup> Qur'ān 6:1.

<sup>23</sup> Qur'ān 21:22.

<sup>24</sup> Qur'ān 17:42. The beginning of the verse reads: "Say: If there were other gods along with Him, as they say . . ."

<sup>25</sup> Qur'ān 23:91. The beginning of the verse reads: "God hath not chosen any son, nor is there any god along with Him; else would each god have assuredly championed that which he created . . ."

<sup>26</sup> Qur'ān 4:172.

<sup>27</sup> Qur'ān 16:17.

<sup>28</sup> Qur'ān 21:22.

<sup>29</sup> Qur'ān 23:91. See above, footnote 25.

<sup>30</sup> Qur'ān 17:42. See above, footnote 24.

<sup>31</sup> Qur'ān 21:22.

<sup>32</sup> Qur'ān 47:19.

<sup>33</sup> Qur'ān 112:1.

<sup>34</sup> Muslim 1:8 (no. 21).

<sup>35</sup> Qur'ān 2:221.

36 Qur'ān 55:46.

37 Possibly at-Tirmidhī.

38 Tirmidhī, 8:7 (no. 983).

39 Qur'ān 10:91.

40 An epithet for Abraham.

41 Qur'ān 10:91.

42 Qur'ān 21:87.

43 Qur'ān 68:48

44 Qur'ān 37:143-144.

45 Qur'ān 21:87.

46 Qur'ān 10:91.

47 Qur'ān 10:91.

48 Qur'ān 3:18.

49 Qur'ān 12:26. This in reference to Potiphar's wife who attempted to seduce Joseph and when he stood fast and tried to get away, she falsely accused him. One of her own people, the aforementioned witness, said in verses 26-27, "If his shirt is torn from the front then she speaketh truth and he is of the liars. And if his shirt is torn from behind, then she hath lied and he is of the truthful."

50 Qur'ān 35:10.

51 Qur'ān 35:34.

52 Qur'ān 39:74.

53 Qur'ān 10:10.

54 Tirmidhī, 45:9 (no. 3443).

55 Meaning 'Umar and his son Ibn 'Umar.

56 That is, on the Day of Judgment.

57 Qur'ān 35:34. The ḥadīth containing the Qur'ānic verse is in Suyūṭī, al-Jāmi' aṣ-Ṣaḡīr, II, 136.

58 Muslim, 1:8 (no. 21).

59 In Arabic: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

60 Munkar and Nakīr who examine the dead as to their faith.

61 Qur'ān 2:30. The entire verse reads: "And when thy Lord said unto the angels: Lo! I am about to place a viceroy in the earth, they said: Wilt Thou place therein one who will do harm therein and will shed blood, while we, we hymn Thy praise and sanctify Thee? He said: Surely I know that which ye know not."

62 According to Islamic law.

63 Qur'ān 2:30.

64 That is, God addresses the souls before their descent into this world.

65 Qur'ān 7:172.

66 That is, the devil.

67 Qur'ān 2:163.

68 Qur'ān 2:163.

69 Qur'ān 17:70.

70 Qur'ān 9:28.

71 Qur'ān 24:26.

72 Qur'ān 19:90.

73 Iḥsān connotes performing good deeds or doing what is right.

74 Qur'ān 55:60.

75 Qur'ān 55:60.

76 Qur'ān 2:40.

77 Qur'ān 19:93.

78 Qur'ān 10:26.

79 Qur'ān 41:33.

80 Qur'ān 39:18.

81 Qur'ān 16:90.

82 Qur'ān 17:7.

83 Qur'ān 10:26.

84 The complete verse, not cited here, is: "For those who do good is the best reward, and even more."

- 85 Qur'ān 13:14.
- 86 Qur'ān 109:6. The Prophet Muḥammad is the speaker.
- 87 Qur'ān 30:4.
- 88 Qur'ān 40:16.
- 89 Qur'ān 53:42.
- 90 Qur'ān 41:33.
- 91 Qur'ān 16:90.
- 92 Qur'ān 16:90.
- 93 Qur'ān 17:7.
- 94 Qur'ān 4:129.
- 95 Qur'ān 22:24.
- 96 That is to say, the definite article in at-tayyib ("the good"), which comprises all that is good in the way of speech.
- 97 Qur'ān 14:24.
- 98 That is, in the Near East.
- 99 Qur'ān 35:10.
- 100 Qur'ān 14:27.
- 101 Qur'ān 48:26.
- 102 That is, Abraham.
- 103 Qur'ān 43:28.
- 104 Qur'ān 43:26-27.
- 105 Qur'ān 41:30.
- 106 Qur'ān 9:40.
- 107 Qur'ān 53:17, referring to Muḥammad's Ascension (Mi'rāj) to the presence of God.
- 108 Qur'ān 9:33.
- 109 Qur'ān 16:60.
- 110 Qur'ān 13:35 and 47:15.
- 111 Qur'ān 19:87.

- 112 Qur'ān 19:90-91.
- 113 Qur'ān 43:86.
- 114 Qur'ān 2:256.
- 115 Qur'ān 39:33.
- 116 Qur'ān 3:64. Muslims are addressing Jews and Christians in this verse.
- 117 For a similar discussion, cf. above, pp. 18-20.
- 118 Perfect and imperfect verbs respectively, meaning "he became bereft of his reason or intellect" due to grief or love.
- 119 Technically it is a glottal stop which can carry the vowels a, i, or u.
- 120 Passive participle of walaha.
- 121 This seems to be more in keeping with lāha, yalīhu, layhan, which means "to be hidden," "to be high," and "to rise."
- 122 Qur'ān 7:127.
- 123 Qur'ān 43:45. At-Tilimsānī is saying that ilāhah of the previous verse is nearer in meaning to the ālihah of this verse.
- 124 That is, the Ninety-nine "Most Beautiful Names" (al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā) of God in the Qur'ān.
- 125 Qur'ān 19:65.
- 126 Qur'ān 56:74.
- 127 That is, this world and the next and their respective periods.
- 128 Because the breathing and the invocation go together.
- 129 Qur'ān 13:15.
- 130 In the name Allāh.
- 131 The word Allāh, in Arabic, contains an alif, three lāms, and a hā'; but the second of those lāms has the sign for doubling the consonant over it, so that, in reality, there are only two lāms actually written.
- 132 Mt. 'Arafāt outside Mecca is one of the stations of the annual pilgrimage. Standing on Mt. 'Arafāt symbolizes standing on the Day of Judgment.
- 133 Namely, the hā' and the wāw.

<sup>134</sup> In the word hawā' ("air").

### Conclusion

- <sup>1</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 339.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 340.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 341.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 343.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 344.
- <sup>6</sup> Qur'ān 21:87. The hadīth is in Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 345.
- <sup>7</sup> Qur'ān 2:255, which reads "Allāh! There is no divinity save Him, the Living, the Eternal. Neither slumber nor sleep overtaketh Him. Unto Him belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he that intercedeth with Him save by His leave? He knoweth that which is in front of them and that which is behind them, while they encompass nothing of His knowledge save what He will. His throne includeth the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of preserving them, and He is the Sublime, the Magnificent."
- <sup>8</sup> Chapter 2 ("The Cow").
- <sup>9</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 346.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 347.
- <sup>11</sup> Referring to Anas b. Mālik.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 348. Abān, the transmitter of this hadīth from Anas ibn Mālik, is the Ahmar addressed by Anas ibn Mālik.
- <sup>13</sup> Qur'ān 112:1-4.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 349.
- <sup>15</sup> Qur'ān 2:156.
- <sup>16</sup> Referring to the beginning of verse 156 which reads: "Those say when a misfortune striketh them . . ."
- <sup>17</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 355.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 356.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 357.
- <sup>21</sup> Qur'ān 3:18.

<sup>22</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 437.

<sup>23</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 359.

<sup>24</sup> Qur'ān 4:110; the rest reads "then seeketh pardon of God, will find God Forgiving, Merciful." The hadīth is from Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 361.

<sup>25</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 366.

<sup>26</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 363.

<sup>27</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 367.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 368.

<sup>29</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 371 (with slight differences).

<sup>30</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 373.

<sup>31</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 375.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 376.

<sup>33</sup> Qur'ān 112.

<sup>34</sup> Qur'ān 113.

<sup>35</sup> Qur'ān 114.

<sup>36</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 377.

<sup>37</sup> This refers to the salutations said immediately after the prayer when seated, following the example of the imam.

<sup>38</sup> Qur'ān 112.

<sup>39</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 378.

<sup>40</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 379.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 381.

<sup>42</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 383.

### Chapter I

<sup>1</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 578.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 580.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 583.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 583.

- 5 Muslim, 39:25 (no. 2203).
- 6 Qur'ān 57:3.
- 7 Qur'ān 33:40-41.
- 8 Qur'ān 40:55.
- 9 Qur'ān 20:130.
- 10 Bukhārī, 80:1 (no. 5965).
- 11 Muslim, 48:10 (no. 2692).
- 12 Muslim, 48:18 (no. 2723).
- 13 Bukhārī, 80:15 (no. 5942).
- 14 Tirmidhī, 45:13 (no. 3448).
- 15 Tirmidhī, 45:81 (no. 3567, with slight differences).
- 16 Bukhārī, 80:65 (no. 6019).
- 17 Bukhārī, 80:65 (no. 6019).
- 18 Muslim, 38:2 (no. 2137).
- 19 Qur'ān 112.
- 20 Qur'ān 113 and 114.
- 21 Tirmidhī, 45:21 (no. 3462).
- 22 Bukhārī, 80:7 (no. 5933).
- 23 Qur'ān 112.
- 24 Qur'ān 113.
- 25 Qur'ān 114.
- 26 Tirmidhī, 45:21 (no. 3462).
- 27 Qur'ān 2:255. For the entire verse, see p. 250, note 7.
- 28 Bukhārī, 59:10 (no. 3063).
- 29 Qur'ān 2:285-286.
- 30 Muslim, 6:43 (no. 256).
- 31 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 770.

32 The number thirty-four is unusual, thirty-three being the usual number; but it has been left at thirty-four, because all texts agree on that number.

- 33 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 744.
- 34 Tirmidhī, 45:18 (no. 3458).
- 35 Tirmidhī, 45:17 (no. 3457).
- 36 Bukhārī, 80:5 (no. 5930).
- 37 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 43.
- 38 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 46.
- 39 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 48.
- 40 That is, 'Abbās and the son of 'Abbās.
- 41 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 50.
- 42 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 54.
- 43 Qur'ān 53:37.
- 44 Qur'ān 30:18-19. The hadīth is in Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 77.
- 45 Qur'ān 30:18.
- 46 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 78.
- 47 Qur'ān 59.
- 48 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 79.
- 49 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 82.

50 One of the Prophet's names is Ṣāhib ash-Shafā'ah, "Possessor of Intercession."

51 It is a question of asking blessings upon the Spirit of the Prophet, for he is also known as Rūh al-Quds, "the Holy Spirit."

52 The Prophet is also called Miftāh ar-Rahmah, "the Key of Mercifulness," that is, the key to God's mercifulness.

- 53 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 84.
- 54 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 85.
- 55 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 85.
- 56 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 100.

57 A rak'ah ("unit") is a prayer cycle that includes standing, bowing, and prostration.

58 The speaker is the father of Mubashshir b. Abi'l-Ma'liḥ, a hadīth transmitter.

59 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 101.

60 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 108.

61 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 118.

62 Qur'ān 2:255.

63 Qur'ān 3:18.

64 Qur'ān 3:26. The rest reads: "Thou givest sovereignty unto whom Thou wilt, and Thou withdrawest sovereignty from whom Thou wilt. Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt. In Thy hand is the good. Lo! Thou art able to do all things."

65 Qur'ān 3:27. The beginning of the verse reads: "Thou causest the night to pass into the day and Thou causeth the day to pass into the night. And Thou bringeth forth the living from the dead and Thou bringeth forth the dead from the living."

66 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 123 (with slight differences).

67 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 124.

68 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 127.

69 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 131.

70 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 131.

71 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 132.

72 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 138.

73 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 139.

74 Qur'ān 112:1-4.

75 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 142.

76 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 143.

77 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 144.

78 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 181.

79 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 182.

80 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 211.

81 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 212.

82 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 230 (with slight differences).

83 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 337.

84 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 338.

85 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 335.

86 The speaker is Anas ibn Mālik.

87 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 336.

88 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 492.

89 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 493.

90 Ibn as-Sunnī, nos. 494 and 499 (with slight differences).

91 Qur'ān 11:41.

92 Qur'ān 6:91. The hadīth is in Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 501.

93 The respondent is Mūsā b. Wardān, one of the traditionists who transmitted this hadīth from Abū Hurayrah.

94 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 506.

95 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 508.

96 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 509.

97 Qur'ān 3:83.

98 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 511.

99 The speaker is the traditionist Abū Barīdah al-Aslamī.

100 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 516.

101 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 524.

102 Ibn as-Sunnī, nos. 525 and 529.

103 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 533.

104 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 534.

105 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 535.

106 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 536.

107 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 541.

- 108 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 542.
- 109 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 544.
- 110 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 545.
- 111 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 548.
- 112 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 549.
- 113 Tha spaakar is 'Uthmān ibn Abi'l-Ās, tha Companion; the hadīth is in Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 550.
- 114 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 551.
- 115 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 552.
- 116 Qur'ān 112:3-4.
- 117 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 558.
- 118 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 571.
- 119 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 563.
- 120 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 588.
- 121 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 592.
- 122 Tha istikhārah is a spacial prayar said with tha hope that God will revaal tha answer.
- 123 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 603.
- 124 Ibn as-Sunnī, no. 602.
- 125 That is, the Seal of the Prophets.
- 126 Qur'ān 3:173.

# APPENDIX I

## KEY PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE TEXT\*

Abān b. Abī 'Ayyāsh was a Follower and younkar contamporary of Anas b. Mālik from whom ha ralatad hadīth. Ha lived in tha latter half of the first/savanth oantury.

'Abd Allāh ibn Bishr (or Busr) as-Sahābī was a Companion of tha Prophet and a transmitter of hadīths. He was the last of tha Companions in Damascus to die, in 88 A.H./707 A.D.

'Abd Allāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Tālib was tha naphew of 'Alī, tha Prophet's son-in-law and cousin. He tried unsuccassfully to dissuade his cousin al-Husayn b. 'Alī from going to Kūfa to ba proclaimed caliph. He died c. 80 or 85/699-704.

'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān b. al-Hakam, born in 26/646-647, was the fifth caliph of tha Umayyad line and reigned from 65-86/685-705. Ha main-tained a strong cantral administration, isauad gold coinaga, substitutad Arabic for Greak and Persian in the bureaucracy, and was occupied with tha Byzantinas and rebellions in Iraq and Masopotamia. In religious matters ha had tha 'Uthmānic text of tha Qur'ān re-issued and built the Dome of the Rock. Ha died in 86/705.

'Abd ar-Rahīm al-Qinā'ī (or al-Qunnā'ī) was a pious Sufi shaykh and descendant of 'Alī b. Abī Tālib. From North Africa, he movad to Mecca than sattled parmanantly in Qina in southarn Egypt, whara ha died in 592/1196 at tha aga of 77. Miraclaa ware attributad to bim.

Abū Bakr as-Siddīq 'Abd Allāh b. 'Uthmāo b. 'Amir b. 'Amr b. Ka'b b. Sa'd b. Taym was the first caliph chosan after Muḥammad's daath. His daughter 'Ā'isha married tha Prophat. During his caliphata, he defeated tha apostates in the Riddah wars and daalt with Arab expansion into Syria and Iraq. Ha was threa yaars younkar thao tha Prophet baing born after 570 A.D. and diad a natural daath in 13/634 at about tha age of 63. Ha was known for his truthfulness and pious sincarity.

Abu'l-'Āliyah Rufay' b. Mihrān ar-Riyāhī was a libarated slave of the Banu Riyāh who transmittad hadīths and tha Qur'ān. He balongad to the first genaration of Tābi'ūn (Followers of tha Companions of tha Pro-phat), rasiding in Basra (Iraq), whara he diad in 90 or 96/708-709 or 714-715.

Abu'l-Dardā' al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī was a younkar contemporary of Muḥammad. Ha transmittad hadīths, was an authority on the Qur'ān, and one of

\* The above names are alphabetized according to tha first name as given in the text.

the few who collected revelations during the Prophet's lifetime. Sufis consider him a zāhid (ascetic) belonging to the Ahl al-Ṣuffah (contemplatives). He was sent to Damascus as a judge, but he also taught the Qur'ān. He died there in c. 32/652-653.

Abu Dā'ūd as-Sijistānī, Sulaymān b. al-'Ash'ath was a disciple of Ibn Hanbal, the founder of the Hanbalī school of jurisprudence, and a traditionist whose reputation for knowledge and piety made him one of the established authorities. He wrote Kitāb as-Sunan, one of the six major canonical books, which contains 4800 hadīths, and he was the first to include critical notes.

Abū Hurayrah was a close Companion of the Prophet and one of the most prolific transmitters of hadīths due to his excellent memory. About 3500 hadīths are attributed to him. He was named prefect of Bahrain under the caliph 'Umar and died in 57 or 58/676-678 at the age of 78.

Abū Mūsā 'Abd Allāh b. Qays b. Salīm al-Ash'arī was a Companion, transmitter of hadīths, and military leader. The Prophet sent him to Yemen with Mu'adh b. Jabal to teach the Qur'ān and spread Islam. The caliph 'Umar appointed him governor of Basra (Iraq) where he participated in the Arab conquest of Mesopotamia. Later he was made governor of Kūfa (Iraq) at the behest of its citizens and died there in c. 42/662.

Abū Muslim al-Agharr al-Madanī al-Kūfī was a follower who related hadīths from Abū Hurayrah and Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī. No dates are known but since he was their contemporary, though probably younger, he would have lived in the late first and early second centuries/late seventh and early eighth centuries.

Abū Nu'aym al-Isfahānī, Ahmad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Ahmad b. Ishāq b. Mūsā b. Mīhrān ash-Shāfi'ī was an expert ḥafīz (one who has memorized the Qur'ān) and traditionist and an authority on Islamic jurisprudence and Sufism. Born in Isfahan (Iran) in c. 336/948, to a family whose grandfather was a well-known ascetic and whose father was a scholar who had him taught by the best teachers, he continued his education by traveling to Iraq, the Hijaz, and Khurasan (Iran) to study. He wrote Hilyat al-Awliyā' wa Tabaqāt al-Aṣfiyā', which was completed in 422/1031. It includes a discussion of Sufism, various etymologies of the origin of the word, and an account of the lives and sayings of Muslim saints and their miracles. He also wrote a history of Isfahan. He died in 430/1038-1039.

Abu Sa'īd al-Kharrāz, whose full name is Abū Sa'īd Ahmad b. 'Isā al-Kharrāz, was an early third/ninth century mystic from Baghdad who associated with several Sufi shaykhs including as-Sarī as-Saqatī and Dhu'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī. He is the author of Kitāb as-Sirr and like his contemporary al-Junayd advocated a "sober" type of mysticism in conformity with the Sbarī'ah. He believed that fanā', which he defined as "the annihilation of the consciousness of manhood," and baqā', "subsistence in the contemplation of the Godhead," were the highest stages a mystic could reach. He died in 286/899.

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, whose full name is Abū Sa'īd Sa'īd b. Mālik b. Sinān b. Tha'lab al-Khudrī, was one of the Companions of the Prophet and a member of the Anṣār, supporters of Muhammad from Medina. He accompanied the Prophet on twelve expeditions and died in Medina in 74/693-694.

Abū Umamah al-Bāhilī was a Companion of the Prophet and a transmitter of hadīths and fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) to the Muslim community. He lived in the first/seventh century.

Adam is the name of the first man whom God created, as in the Old Testament, and is also the first prophet in Islam.

Ahmad b. Hanbal, the "imam of Baghdad," was not only a famous theologian, faqīh, and muhaddith, but also the founder of one of the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence named after him. His most well-known work is his Musnad, a collection of hadīths arranged according to the transmitter rather than subject matter. His dates are 164-241/780-856.

'Ā'ishah bint Abī Bakr was the third wife of the Prophet (after Khadijah bint al-Khuwaylid and Sawdah bint Zam'ah) and his favorite. She was born c. 614 in Mecca. Because of her special position, she was able to relate many traditions of the Prophet. She was also known for her knowledge of poetry and eloquence as well as Arab history. At the Battle of the Camel in 35/656, she along with Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr led the opposition against 'Alī. The latter two opponents were killed and she withdrew from political life and was ultimately reconciled with 'Alī. She died in 58/678.

'Alī b. Abī Tālib was the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet. He was among the first to embrace Islam and later married Fāṭimah, one of Muhammad's daughters, and by her had (al-)Ḥasan and (al-)Ḥusayn. 'Alī accompanied the Prophet and took part in all of his expeditions. As the fourth caliph, he was pious and like his two predecessors, he was assassinated, dying in 39/659-660 in his sixth year of rule at the age of 62 or 63.

'Alī Mūsā ar-Riḍā, whose full name is Abū'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ar-Riḍā b. Mūsā al-Kāzīm b. Ja'far as-Ṣādiq b. Muḥammad al-8ākīr b. 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn, was the eighth of the twelve Shi'ite imams. The caliph al-Ma'mūn gave his daughter Umm Habbīb to him in marriage and wanted to make him his successor but the 'Abbāsids rejected him as an outsider. He was born in Medina in 151 or 153/768 or 770 and died in 202 or 203/817-819.

'Alqamah b. 'Abd Allāh b. Sunan al-Mazanī al-Baṣrī was a muhaddith who related traditions handed down from his father and Ibn 'Umar among others and was cited by Qatādah and other transmitters. He died in the caliphate of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, c. 100/720.

'Amr b. Qays al-Malā'ī, known as Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Kūfī, was a pious muhaddith who related traditions from many authorities. He died in 146/763-764.

Anas b. Mālik, also known as Abū Hamzah, was a Companion of the Prophet and his servant. He was one of the most prolific transmitters of hadīths, given his unique position, and many of them are found in the



Musnad of Ahmad b. Hanbal. After the Prophet's death, he took part in military campaigns and was quite old when he died in Basra in c. 91-93/709-712, between 97 and 107 years of age.

'Atā. Perhaps it is Abū Muḥammad 'Atā' b. Abī Rabāḥ Aslam (or Sālīm) b. Saḥwān who was an esteemed juriconsult, follower, traditionist, and devout ascetic who derived his knowledge of law and hadīth from Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī (a Companion who died in 78/697-698 at the age of 94), 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās, 'Abd Allāh b. az-Zubayr, and other Companions. Many cited him as an authority on hadīth including Qatādah and Mālik b. Dīnār. Abū Ḥanīfah (79-149/698-767), the founder of the Ḥanefī school of jurisprudence, attended his lectures. He also held the office of muftī and was considered the most learned man in his day regarding the rites of the Pilgrimage, according to Qatādah. He was born in Yemen and died in 114 or 115/732-734.

Al-Azhārī. Abū Mansūr Muḥammad b. Ahmad was an Arab lexicographer born in 282/895 in Herat (Afghanistan) and died there in 370/980-981. He studied grammar with Niftawayh and wrote many lexicographical works including Tahdhīb al-Lughah, a dictionary in ten volumes.

Al-Bare' b. 'Azib b. al-Harith al-Awsī al-Anṣārī was a Companion of the Prophet who also related hadīths. He took part in military campaigns with the Prophet and later in the wars of conquest. After retiring to Kufa (Iraq), he became blind near the end of his life and died c. 72/691-692.

Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ju'fī was a famous muḥaddith who studied traditions with the most outstanding teachers of Mecca and Medina, Egypt, Iraq, and central Asia. His Jamī' al-Sahīh (or Sahīh al-Bukhārī, as it is often called), is a collection of hadīths arranged according to chapters of jurisprudence. Of the six accepted canonical authorities, his collection and that of Muslim are regarded as the leading two. He was born in 194/809-810 in Bukhara (Uzbekistan, U.S.S.R.) and died there in 256/870.

Ad-Daqqāq, Abū 'Alī al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī was a great Sufi shaykh who became the teacher and father-in-law of another famous Sufi master Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī. He held regular gatherings (majālis) where he taught his disciples. His death date is 421/1021.

Dhu'n-Nūn al-Misrī Abū'l-Fayḍ Thawbān b. Ibrāhīm al-Misrī was a great Sufi mystic who was the first to teach about the nature of the gnostic path and the mystic states and stations. He held the view of the uncreatedness of the Qur'ān. His teachings on Sufi doctrine are found in the writings of others. He was born in Upper Egypt c. 180/796 and died in Giza in 246/860-861.

Fakhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī, whose full name is Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī at-Taymī al-Bakrī at-Ṭabarastānī was also known as Ibn al-Khaṭīb. He was a famous and pious Shāfi' scholar and faqīh, philosopher and metaphysician and wrote many works in each of his areas of expertise including scholastic theology (kelām) and commentaries on the Qur'ān, on grammar and jurisprudence. His dates are c. 555-606/1150-1210.

Al-Farrā', the sobriquet of Abū Zakariyā' Yahyā b. Ziyād ad-Deylemī, was one of the most famous grammarians of Kufa (Iraq). He was the disciple of al-Kisā'ī and renowned for his encyclopaedic knowledge not only of grammar but also the history of the pre-Islamic Arab tribal battles (ayyām al-'Arab), astrology, medicine, hadīth, and fiqh. He was born in 144/761-762 and died on his way to Mecca in 207/822-823.

Fātimah was one of the four daughters born to the Prophet Muḥammad and his first wife Khadijah (the others include Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthūm, and Zaynab). She was a very pious and devoted person who married 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and bore al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn and two daughters also named Umm Kulthūm and Zaynab. She died six months after her father in 11/632 at about the age of thirty. Fātimah is considered to be the highest of the women in Paradise after the Virgin Mary.

Gabriel, Jabrī'īl or Jibrīl in Arabic, is one of the four archangels of God and the messenger through whom the revelation was sent to the Prophet Muḥammad. He is identified with the Spirit and guided Muḥammad on his Ascension (Mi'rāj). He appeared to him and his followers as a man with black hair and flowing white robes.

al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad at-Ṭūsī (450-505/1058-1111) was a brilliant theologian, jurist, philosopher, and mystic of Islam, who is called the "Proof of Islam" (Hujjat al-Islām) because of his great stature as a Muslim thinker. He reconciled exoteric and esoteric Islam, henceforth making the two inseparable. The scope of his writings embraced among others Ihyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn (The Revival of Religious Sciences), his magnum opus in four volumes; al-Munqidh min ad-Dalāl (The Redeemer from Error), his autobiography; Tahāfat al-Falāsifah (The Collapse of the Philosophers), a critique of philosophers; and Minhāj al-'Abidīn (The Way of the Worshippers), his last work.

Al-Hajjāj b. Yūsuf b. al-Ḥakam b. 'Aqīl ath-Thaqafī, Abū Muḥammad (41-95/661-714) was one of the most famous governors of the Umayyads. Though extremely harsh, he was a capable administrator who quelled revolts for the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik, expanded the empire under the Caliph Walīd, maintained the discipline of the Arab troops, and stabilized the economy.

Al-Hakīm (see Muḥammad at-Tirmidhī)

Hammād. Perhaps it is Hammād b. Salama, known as Abū Salema who was an expert and authority on traditions and was known for his piety and learning. He died in 168/784-785.

Hārithah. Perhaps it is Hārithah b. Wahb al-Khuzā'i, a brother of 'Ubayd Allāh b. 'Umar on his mother's side and a Companion of the Prophet from whom he related hadīths. He lived in the early first/seventh century and accompanied those who went to Kufa (Iraq) to settle.

Al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (c. 3-49/624-625 to 669-670) was the first son of 'Alī and Fātimah, the Prophet's daughter. He held claim to the caliphate for a time until he relinquished it to Mu'awiyah b. Abī Sufyān in order to avoid bloodshed. Among the Shī'īs, he is considered the

second imām after 'Alī; his brother al-Husayn (c. 5-61/626-680). the third.

Iblīs is the proper name of the devil, also known as ash-Shayṭān. By some Muslims he is considered to be a jinn created of fire who disobeyed God by refusing to bow down to Adam. However, Sufis say that he was originally an archangel named al-Hārith who, thinking himself higher than Adam, refused to bow down to him in disobedience to God. Consequently, he was cast out accursed and succeeded in tempting Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Ibn 'Abbās, whose full name is Abū 'l-'Abbas 'Abd Allāh b. al-'Abbās, was the first cousin of the Prophet (the son of his paternal uncle) and a famous traditionist. He was called the "doctor of the community" (Hibr al-Ummah) and was well known for Qur'ānic exegesis, the biography of the Prophet, poetry and fiqh. He was born three years before the Hijra in 619 and died in 68/687-688.

Ibn al-A'rābī (not to be confused with Ibn el-'Arabī), whose full name is Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ziyād b. al-A'rābī was a philologist of the Kūfan school and a student of al-Kisā'ī among others. He was an expert in grammar, lexicography, Arab genealogies, and poetry and had many pupils. Born in Kufa in 150/767, he died in 231/846.

Ibn Dureyd, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Hasan was a learned philologist, genealogist, lexicographer, and poet who wrote much poetry and philological works. Born in Basra in 223/837-838, he belonged to the south Arabian tribal group of 'Azd and died in Baghdad in 321/933.

Ibn Mas'ūd, whose full name is 'Abd Allāh b. Ghāfil b. Ḥabīb b. Mas'ūd al-Hudhālī, was one of the earliest Muslims and Companions of the Prophet, who followed him to Medina. He was a notable Qur'ān reciter, and also known to have related hadīth from the Prophet. He is frequently cited by al-Tirmidhī. He was a hedouin of humble origins and died in c. 32/652-653.

Ibn Mukarram, whose full name is Abū Paḍl Muḥammad b. Mukarram b. 'Alī b. Ahmad al-Anṣarī al-Ifriqī al-Miṣrī Jamāl ad-Dīn, was the qādī (judge) of Tripoli (North Africa) and one of the kuttāb (secretaries) under the sultan Qalā'ūn (r. 678-689/1279-1290). He is also the author of several works including the famous Lisān al-'Arab, a dictionary based on five earlier ones and arranged according to the third radical of the verb. He was born in 630/1233 and died in 711/1311-1312.

Ibn as-Sunnī, whose full name is al-Ḥāfiz al-Imām Abū Bakr Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm b. Asbat ad-Dīnawarī, was a mawlā (client) of Je'far b. Abī Tālib (the brother of 'Alī) and a pious muhaddith who transmitted hadīth from an-Nasā'ī, one of the authors of the six canonical collections, and summarized his Sunan in a book called al-Mujtabā. He also wrote 'Amal el-Yawn wa'l-Laylah. He died writing hadīth in 364/974-975 at about eighty years of age.

Ibn 'Umar, whose full name is 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar b. al-Khattāb, was the son of the second caliph and the most often quoted muhaddith because of his high morals and piety. Known also for his gentleness, humility and

noble character, he was offered the caliphate three times but refused the position and also declined the office of qādī, fearing he might misinterpret the Sharī'ah. He remained neutral during the struggle between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah. Born before the Hijra (622 A.D.), he was only fifteen when he fought at the Battle of Uhud in 2/623-624. He also participated in other battles. He died in 73/693 when he was over eighty years old. His life became a model of virtue for later generations.

Ibrāhīm el-Khawāss, whose full name is Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Ahmad b. Ismā'īl al-Khawāss, was a great Sufi sheykh of the third/ninth century on a level with Shaykhs al-Juneid and an-Nūrī. He died in 291/903-904 in Rayy (Iran).

Idrīs is one of the prophets of Islam who is mentioned in the Qur'ān as a man of truth and sincerity, coming between Adam and Noah. He is considered to be an immortal who received revelations and was taken bodily into Paradise, where the Prophet later met him during his Ascension (Mi'rāj). He is usually identified with Enoch.

'Isā b. Maryam is the name for Jesus in the Qur'ān, where he is referred to in twelve surahs. His other various titles are al-Mesīh (the Messiah), nabī (prophet), rasūl (messenger) ibn Maryam (son of Mary), min el-muqarrabīn (of those brought near [to God]), wajīh (eminent in this world and the next) mubārak (blessed), 'Abd Allāh (slave of God), kalimat Allāh (the Word of God), and qawl el-heqq (the Word of Truth). His birth to the Virgin Mary, as a result of the Immaculate Conception, was announced by Gabriel and is considered a creative decree by God similar to that of Adam. He performed many miracles such as speaking from the cradle (19:30), raising the dead (3:49), and bringing down a prepared table (5:112-115). Islam views Jesus as a prophet, not the Son of God (4:171), who was not crucified by the Jews but only appeared so (4:157), and was taken up by God unto Himself (4:158). He is called the Messiah who will return again to be a witness on the Day of Judgment (4:159) against unbelieving Jews and Christians. According to Tradition, during his Mi'rāj the Prophet met Jesus who is to return, kill the Antichrist, and bring on a reign of peace for forty years before dying a natural death. The Sufis consider Jesus the Seal of Sanctity while Muḥammad is considered the Seal of Prophecy.

Jonah or Yūnus (b. Mettai) in Arabic is one of the prophets in Islam who was sent to the people of Nineveh, and when his people did not heed his words, he denounced them and fled, not waiting to see that they had repented. He took a ship but was cast off as a bad omen (37:139-141). The Qur'ān also refers to him as Dhu'n-Nūn or "Man of the Fish" (21:87) because he was swallowed up. After repenting and praising God, he was forgiven and thrown up on an island and eventually sent as a guide to over 100,000 people (assumed to be Nineveh again). He lived in the time of the Assyrian Empire, estimated by some authorities to be c. 800 B.C.

Joseph or Yūsuf (b. Ya'qūb) in Arabic is a prophet in Islam who was known for his extreme steadfastness, patience, and devotion to God, and his incomparable beauty. The twelfth chapter of the Qur'ān is named Sūrah Yūsuf and deals with his life and separation from his father, his virtuous conduct in the face of difficult trials, tribulations and

temptations, and how he was rewarded and elevated in rank and reunited with his brothers and beloved father.

Al-Junejd, whose full name is Abu'l-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. al-Junejd al-Khazzāz al-Qawārīrī en-Nihāwandī, was a famous Sufi shaykh and the nephew and disciple of Sheykh as-Sarī as-Saqatī. Born in Beghdad, he studied Islamic law and associated with Hārith al-Muḥāsibī, who like him advocated a "sober" and rigorous kind of Sufism. He is said to have influenced al-Hallāj. Parts of his Resā'il are cited in as-Sarrāj's Kitāb al-Luma'. He died in 298/910.

Al-Jurayrī, Abū Muḥammad who died in 311/923-924, was according to es-Suleimī one of the chief disciples of al-Junejd as well as a disciple of Sahl b. 'Abd Allāh at-Tustarī and one of the most learned of Sufi shaykhs to preside after al-Junejd "due to the perfection of his state and the soundness of his knowledge." He also related hadīths.

Khawwāt b. Jubayr b. Nu'mān b. Umayyah b. al-Burak was one of the Companions of the Prophet who related hadīths. He fought and was wounded at the Battle of Uhud in 2/623-624, and died at the age of 74 in Medina in 40/660-661.

Mālik b. Dinār, Abū Yehyā was a mawlā (client) of the Banū Sāma b. Lu'ay, a subgroup of the Banū Quraysh. He was noted for his learning and intense piety and spent his time teaching and writing out copies of the Qur'ān. He died in his native Basra in 131/748-749.

Al-Ma'mūn b. Hārūn ar-Rashīd, born in 170/786, was the son of the 'Abbāsid caliph and a Persian slave. He ultimately defeated his brother al-Amīn in a fierce struggle to become caliph in 198/813. He officially supported Mu'tazilism, (the view which held that the Qur'ān was created) and encouraged learning by building a library and astronomical observatory in Baghdad and a medical school in Jundi Shepur (Iren). He also patronized poetry, philosophy, the exact sciences, and Arabic translations from Greek works. Because of his Persian sympathies, he was not popular with the Arabs. There were many political uprisings and wars with the Byzantines. He died fighting the latter in 218/833, but not before appointing his brother al-Mu'taṣim as his successor.

Moses, or Mūsā in Arabic, is a prophet in Islam as in Judaism and Christianity. He was sent to Pharaoh as a warning and to the Israelites as a guide.

Mu'adh b. Jabal was one of the Companions of the Prophet of whom Muḥammad said that he was "the most knowledgeable in my community of what is permitted and what is forbidden." He was among those Companions who compiled the Qur'ān in the time of the Prophet and transmitted hadīths. He died in the caliphate of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 13-23/634-644).

Mu'awiyah b. Abī Sufyān was one of the Companions of the Prophet who served him as secretary, later becoming governor of Syria and after the assassination of 'Alī, the first Umayyad caliph. He distinguished himself as a capable and energetic military leader and brilliant administrator who expanded the caliphate, ended anarchy, created a disciplined army with regular pay, organized the finances of the empire, and

won over his rivals with political finesse. His men were devoted to him and he ruled for forty years. Born in Mecca before the Hijra c. 600 A.D., he died in Damascus in 60/680, in his eighties. He succeeded in getting his son Yazīd named as caliph after him.

Muḥammad b. al-Hajjāj b. Yūsuf was the son of the famous Umayyad governor al-Hajjāj b. Yūsuf. He aided his father in maintaining order in the provinces and died in 91/710 on the same day as his paternal uncle Muḥammad b. Yūsuf, which was a double loss to his father.

Muḥammad al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmidhī, whose full name is Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ḥusayn at-Tirmidhī, also known as al-Ḥakīm (the wise), was a mystic, muḥaddith, Sunnī theologian, and Hanafī faqīh. In his writings such as Nawādir al-Uṣūl and Khetm al-Wilāyah, he discusses such mystical ideas as the Nūr Muḥammedī, the Ḥaqīqah Adamiyyah, the symbolism and value of the twenty-eight letters of the Arabic alphabet, angelology, and the criteria for determining sanctity. From quotations and references he was the first to compile biographies on the history of Sufism. Louis Massignon, the famous French orientalist calls him the "true precursor of Ibn al-'Arabī who three centuries later studied him closely and admired him." He died in 285/898.

Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. Nu'mān, whose full name is Shaykh Shams ed-Dīn Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. an-Ḥu'mān Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Marākishī al-Fāsī at-Tilimsānī es-Sūfī al-Melikī, was a deeply pious ascetic who was very knowledgeable in Mālikī fiqh (jurisprudence). He was born in 607/1210-1211 and went to Alexandria as a youth where he eventually had a following. He died in 683/1284-1285 and is buried in Cairo.

Muslim b. al-Hajjāj Abu'l-Ḥusayn al-Qushayrī an-Hisābūrī was an Arab traditionist who became famous for his compilation of hadīths entitled Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, which forms one of the six canonical works on Tradition. He traveled extensively to collect hadīths in Arabia, Syria, Iraq and Egypt and arranged them according to subject matter, including an introduction and a conclusion with a tafsīr (commentary). He wrote other books on fiqh and traditionists but none is extant. Born in 202 or 206/817 or 821 in Hisabur (Persia), he died in 261/875 and is buried in a nearby suburb of his native town.

An-Nasē'ī, Abū 'Abd ar-Rahmān Aḥmad b. Shu'ayb b. 'Alī b. Beḥr b. Sinān is another of the well-known hadīth collectors whose work became one of the six standard canonical books on the Traditions of the Prophet. His compilation is distinguished by the fact that it includes forms of bequests and donations and endowments which the other collections lack. He traveled widely to gather his information and is said to have written two other works: Kitāb Khasā'is Amīr al-Mu'minin 'Alī b. Abī Tālib and Kitāb ad-Du'afā'. He died a martyr's death in 303/915-916 and is buried in Mecca.

An-Hawawī (or an-Hawāwī), Muḥyī'd-Dīn Abū Zakariyā' Yaḥyā b. Sharaf b. Hūrī b. Ḥasen b. Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Jum'ā b. Ḥizām al-Ḥizāmī ed-Dimashqī was one of the leading authorities famed for his knowledge of hadīth and Shāfi'ī jurisprudence. In addition to his hadīth qudsī (sacred traditions), he wrote a significant commentary on Muslim's

Sāhīh. Born in Nawa, south of Damascus in 631/1233-1234. he died in 676/1277-1278.

Pharoah or Fir'awn in Arabic is a proper name in the Qur'ān referring to the king of Egypt in the time of Moses as well as in the time of Joseph c. 400 years earlier. Pharoah is described as a tyrant who oppressed the Israelites and crucified his own magicians when they acknowledged the supremacy of the God of Moses. As in the Old Testament account, Pharoah and his host were drowned while Moses and his people passed safely to the other side of the sea. The Qur'ān states that Pharoah repented (10:91-92) as he was drowning, but it is generally believed that it was not accepted.

Al-Qādī 'Iyād, whose full name is Abu'l-Faḍl 'Iyād b. Mūsā b. 'Iyād al-Yahsubī as-Sabtī al-Mālikī, was a Mālikī judge (qādī) and jurist, traditionalist, historian, scholar and poet. Born in Ceuta (Morocco) in 476/1083 where he was educated, he moved on to Cordova to devote himself to the study of hadīth. Later he served as a respected qādī first in his hometown, then in Cordova for a short time before resuming his previous position in Ceuta. He wrote an apologetic history of the Prophet called Kitāb esb-Shifā' bi-Ta'rīf Huqūq al-Muṣṭafā; a dictionary of rare terms found in Mālik b. Anas's Muwatta' and al-Bukhārī's Sahīh and Muslim's Sahīh called Mashāriq al-Anwār 'alā Shihāh al-Āthār; and a biographical dictionary of Mālikī scholars entitled Kitāb Tartīb al-Madārik wa Taqrīb al-Masālik li-Ma'rifat A'lam Madhhab Mālik. He died in Marrakash in 544/1149-1150.

Qatādah. Perhaps it is Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb Qatādah b. Di'āma b. 'Azīz b. 'Umar b. Rabī'a b. 'Amr b. al-Hārith b. Sadūs as-Sadūsī who was one of the Followers (Tābi'ūn) of the Companions. Blind from his birth in Basra in 60/679-680, he became very learned in history and poetry and was also the expert of his day on the genealogies of the Arab tribes. He was the first to coin the word Mu'tazila for the group around 'Amr b. 'Ubayd who had separated from Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and his circle. He died in 117 or 118/735-736.

Razīn, whose full name is Abu'l-Ḥasan Razīn b. Mu'āwiyah b. 'Ammār al-'Abdarī was the Mālikī imām in Mecca and an expert on hadīth and history. In his Kitāb Razīn he collected and classified all the hadīths found in the Sahīh of al-Bukhārī and the Sahīh of Muslim, the Muwatta' of Mālik b. Anas, the Sunan of al-Tirmidhī, and the Sunan of Abū Dā'ūd. He also wrote a history of Mecca which is an abridged work based on al-Azraqī's. He was born in Saragossa, Spain and died there in c. 525/1130.

Sahl at-Tustarī, whose full name is Abū Muḥammad Sahl b. 'Abd Allāh b. Yūnus, was a mystic and Sunnī theologian born in 203/818-819 in Tustar (Iran). He taught that the spirit (rūh) is superior to the soul (nafs) and survives after death and that there are four levels of meaning to the Qur'ān. His teachings on the obligatory character of repentance led to his exile in Basra where he died in 283/896. Although he wrote no works, his pupil Muḥammad b. Sālim (d. 297/909) collected his sayings, which ultimately gave rise to the Sālimiyyah theological school.

Ash-Shiblī, Abū Bakr Dulaf b. Jaḥdar was a Sunnī mystic, born in Baghdad in 247/861. Originally he worked as a government official until the age of forty, when he was drawn to asceticism by Khayr Hassāj, a friend of al-Junayd. He publicly denied his friend al-Hallāj though he secretly admired him. Eventually his strange behavior and eccentricities landed him in an asylum where he discoursed on mysticism to distinguished guests. His sayings are preserved in collections on ecstatic expressions (shethiyāt), though he left no books. In dogma he followed al-Junayd, a more sober type than al-Hallāj, and the Mālikī madhhab. In the chain of transmission, he comes between al-Junayd and Naṣrābādī, his disciple. He died in Baghdad in 334/945-946.

Shu'bah, whose full name is Abu Bistām Shu'bah b. al-Ḥajjāj b. al-Ward, was an expert in hadīths, having studied them from a great number of followers (Tābi'ūn), as well as a poet and a man of great learning, piety, asceticism, and kindness. Ash-Shāfi'ī said that the hadīths extant in Iraq would have been lost, if not for him. He is said to have known about two thousand of them and was also a master of Arabic. He died in 160/776-777 at the age of seventy-five.

At-Tabarānī, Abu'l-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Ahmad b. Ayyūb b. Mutayr al-Lakhmī was a traditionist and the chief ḥāfiẓ of his day. He left Syria and spent thirty-three years studying in Iraq, the Hijaz, Yemen, Egypt and Mesopotamia. He is said to have had a great memory and learned hadīth from about one thousand people. He wrote al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, a work on hadīth and traditionists, and al-Mu'jam as-Saghir, an abridged version. He was born in Tabariyeh in Palestine and settled in Isfahan where he died in 360/971 at the age of about one hundred.

Talq b. Ḥabīb al-'Anazī al-Baṣrī was a Follower (Tābi') who related hadīths from 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās, Ibn az-Zubayr, Ibn 'Amr b. al-'Ās, and others. He was a Murjīte who felt that when a Muslim committed a mortal sin, he was still a Muslim whose faith only God could judge. He died in the reign of al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (c. 75-95/694-714).

At-Tilimsānī, 'Aḥīf ad-Dīn Sulaymān b. 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Alī b. Yūsuf was a Sufi who wrote poetry on Sufi love. For a time he was also a government official in Syria. Of his works only his Dīwān, a collection of mystical poems, and his Risālah fī 'Ilm al-'Arūd have survived. He claimed to have reached 'irfān (gnosis) on his deathbed and apparently was an admirer and follower of Ibn al-'Arabī. He was born in 616/1219 and died in Damascus in 690/1291.

At-Tirmidhī, Abū 'Isā Muḥammad b. 'Isā b. Sawra b. Shaddād is the author of one of the six canonical collections of hadīths. He traveled extensively in Khurasan (Iran), Iraq, and the Hijaz (Saudi Arabia) to collect hadīths, learning from such teachers as Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Hanbal, al-Bukhārī, and Abū Dā'ūd as-Sijistānī. His Sahīh contains fewer traditions than those of al-Bukhārī and Muslim but also less repetitions and is distinguished by critical remarks regarding the isnād, the chain of transmission, and the points of difference among the four madhabs (schools of jurisprudence). His other works are not extant. Born in 208-209/824, his death date is variously given as 279/892-893 or 275/888-889 or 270/883-884.

'Umar b. al-Khattāb was the second caliph after Abū Bakr and one of the best leaders of the early period of Islam. Born about thirty years before the Hijra, he became caliph in 13/634 and instituted a register or dīwān of those eligible for military pensions, established regulations concerning non-Muslims, founded military centers which evolved into great cities, and created the office of qādī (judge). The title of khelīfah (caliph) was changed to amīr al-mu'minīn (commander of the faithful) during his rule. He was greatly respected and feared because of his moral integrity. A Persian slave named Abū Lu'lu'e, who had appealed to him in vain about a heavy tax, mortally wounded him. He died in 23/644.

'Uthmān b. Abī'l-'Āṣ, whose full name is Abū 'Abd Allāh 'Uthmān b. Abī'l-'Āṣ ath-Thaqafī et-Ta'ifī was a Companion and a transmitter of hadīths about the Prophet and his mother Amīneh. He stated that he saw her when she delivered Muḥammad. The Prophet put him in charge of the tawāf (circumambulation of the Ka'aba), and he prevented his tribe, the Banū Thaqīf, from participating in the wars of Apostasy. He died in c. 51 or 55/671 or 675 in Basra.

'Uthmān b. 'Affān was the third caliph after Abū Bakr and 'Umar and the first convert of high social rank—a rich merchant from the great Meccan family of the Banū Umayyah. He was handsome, good natured and pious and married to Muḥammad's daughter Ruqayyah. After her death, he married her sister Umm Kulthūm. As caliph (r. 23-35/644-656), he was faulted for putting his relatives in key positions and for destroying the various readings of the Qur'ān, no doubt in order to have one uniform version. He was badly advised. The first half of his reign was said to have been a period of good government and the last half of confusion with rebellions in Iraq and elsewhere. He was besieged in his home and killed in 35/656, and his wife wounded, by a group of disgruntled Egyptians who were led to believe that he intended punishing them.

Yūnus b. 'Ubayd, Abū 'Abd Allāh was a pious hadīth transmitter who belonged to the generation of the Followers of the Companions of the Prophet. He was from Kūfa and a ṣawī (client) of 'Abd al-Qays. He died in 139 or 140/756-758.

Zayd b. Arqam was one of the Companions and a member of the Anṣār of Medina from the Banū Hārith b. al-Khazraj and a hadīth transmitter. He lived in Kūfa and died there in 68/687-688.

Az-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām, whose full name is Abū 'Abd Allāh az-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām b. Khuwaylid b. Asad b. 'Abd al-'Uzza b. Qusayy b. Kilāb al-Hawāzī, was a cousin of the Prophet and a nephew of Khadījah (bint Khuwaylid). He was one of the earliest converts to Islam (the fifth one according to tradition) and one of the ten Companions promised Paradise by Muḥammad. He married Asmā', the daughter of Abū Bakr, and took part in two hijras to Abyssinia and all the great battles. Known for his courage and gallantry, he was esteemed by the Prophet and died at the Battle of the Camel in 35/655-656 at the age of 60 to 67.

## APPENDIX II

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Allāh: the Arabic word for God.

'Arīf (pl. 'arīfūn): gnostic; one who "knows" God directly.

Al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā: the Ninety-nine Most Beautiful Names of God which refer to His Attributes.

Asrār: see sirr.

Baqe': the spiritual station of abiding in God's presence after fane'.

Basīreh: spiritual perception or discernment.

Bast: spiritual expansion of the soul having psychological fruits expressed as joy, happiness, and exaltation.

Bātin: inner, esoteric, hidden.

Dhāt: the essence of something as opposed to its attributes.

Dhawq: literally, taste, but synonymous with intuition.

Dhikr: remembrance, remembering, invocation, invoking.

Dhikru'llāh: the remembrance or invocation of God, invoking His Name repeatedly, or the ritual of so doing.

Fanē': the spiritual station of annihilation in God of all perception of oneself.

Faqīr: one who cultivates spiritual poverty; a member of a Sufi order.

Faqr: spiritual poverty; detachment from all inner worldliness representing wealth or richness of mind in a negative and dissipative sense, permitting the Spirit to be unveiled.

Hadīth (pl. ahādīth): the sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muḥammad, which constitute the bases of his Sunnah (Norm).

Hāl (pl. ahwāl): spiritual state which may be temporary as opposed to maqām.

Haqīqah: esoteric Truth; inner reality of something; reality.

Haqq: the Truth, the Real.



Ihsān: virtuous conduct; being virtuous; one of the three principles of religion, the other two being īmān and islām.

īmān: faith or belief in God; faith in God, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Day of Judgment, and in the predestination of good and evil; one of the three principles of religion, the other two being islām and ihsān.

ʿIrfān: see maʿrifah.

Islām: literally, submission; submission to the Divine Will through the five pillars of religion, viz., the Testimony of Faith, the five daily prayers, fasting during the month of Ramadan, legal alms, and the pilgrimage to Mecca; one of the three principles of religion, the other two being īmān and ihsān.

Ism (pl. asmāʾ): see al-Asmāʾ al-Husnā.

Jabarūt: the transcendent spiritual world beyond the psychical domain of the Malakūt; it contains angelic and archangelic realities.

Khalq: the entire Creation in its spiritual, psychical, and physical aspects.

Malakūt: the domain of the World Soul, wherein one finds individual souls and subtle psychical realities.

Maqām (pl. maqāmāt): spiritual station which is a permanent or abiding state.

Maʿrifah: gnosis; direct knowledge of God.

Muḥaddith: a traditionist; one who transmits the ahādīth of the Prophet Muhammad.

Mulk: the physical world.

Murīd: an initiated novice on the Sufi Path.

Mushrik: an idolator or associator; one who associates or attributes partners to God.

Muwahhid: a unitarian; one who affirms God's Oneness and Unity.

Nafas: breath; the life-force or vital spirit.

Nafs: the ego or self which is worldly and self-centered; the soul.

Nūr (pl. anwār): light in the physical, psychological, or spiritual sense.

Qabḍ: spiritual contraction of the soul having psychological fruits expressed as sadness, melancholy, and depression.

Qalb: the subtle heart which is the center of spiritual discernment and intuitions; the physical heart.

Rubūbiyyah: the quality of Divine Lordship; the opposite of ʿubūdiyyah.

Rūb: the Transcendent Spirit in man as opposed to the soul; the immortal soul.

Shahādah: the Testimony of Faith that there is no deity but God and that Muhammad is His Messenger.

Sharīfah: the Religious Law of Islam which covers all areas of life--private and public.

Shaykh: a spiritual master in Sufism.

Shirk: associationism or polytheism; attributing partners to God or placing them on an equal footing.

Sifah (pl. sifāt): an attribute of God.

Sirr (pl. asrār): literally mystery or secret; the innermost center of consciousness or being in man; the Self, the innermost Spirit.

Sunnah: the Norm of the Prophet Muhammad, based on Qur'ānic prescriptions and ahādith.

Tadbīr: self-direction or willful planning as opposed to accepting God's direction and providential decrees.

Tarīqah: the spiritual path or way; a Sufi brotherhood or order.

Taṣawwuf: Islamic mysticism or Sufism which is inseparable from Islam.

Tawhīd: the Oneness or Unity of God which admits of no partners.

ʿUbūdiyyah: the spiritual station of true servanthood, contrasted with rubūbiyyah.

Zāhir: outer, exoteric, outward.

# APPENDIX III

## THE SILSILAH OF THE SHĀDHILĪ ORDER\*

### A. From the Prophet Muḥammad to Shaykh Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh

1. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh
2. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib
3. Al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī
4. Abū Muḥammad Jābir
5. Sa'īd al-Ghaznawī
6. Faṭḥ as-Su'ūd
7. Sa'īd
8. Abū Muḥammad Sa'īd
9. Aḥmad al-Marwānī
10. Ibrāhīm al-Baṣrī
11. Zayn ad-Dīn al-Qazwīnī
12. Muḥammad Shams ad-Dīn
13. Muḥammad Tāj ad-Dīn
14. Nūr ad-Dīn Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī
15. Fakhr ad-Dīn
16. Tuḡay ad-Dīn al-Fuḡayyir
17. 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-'Aṭṭār az-Zayyāt
18. 'Abd as-Salām b. Mashīsh
19. Abū 'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī
20. Abū 'l-'Abbās al-Mursī
21. Aḥmad Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh

### B. From Shaykh Aḥmad Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh to Shaykh Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā al-'Alawī\*

1. Aḥmad Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh
2. Dā'ūd al-Bākhilī
3. Muḥammad Wafā
4. 'Alī b. Wafā
5. Yahyā 'l-Qādirī
6. Aḥmad b. 'Uqba al-Ḥaḍramī
7. Aḥmad Zarrūq
8. Ibrāhīm al-Faḥḥām
9. 'Alī as-Sanhājī ad-Dawwār
10. 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Majdhūb
11. Yūsuf al-Fāsī
12. 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Fāsī
13. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh
14. Qāsim al-Khaṣṣāṣī
15. Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh
16. Al-'Arabī b. Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh
17. 'Alī al-Jamal
18. Al-'Arabī b. Aḥmad ad-Darqāwī
19. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Qādir and Abū Ya'za al-Muhājī
20. Muḥammad b. Qaddūr al-Wakīlī
21. Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb al-Būzīdī
22. Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā 'l-'Alawī

\* This silsilah is taken from Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā al-'Alawī, Kitāb al-Qawl al-Maqbūl (Tunis: Maṭba'at an-Nahḍah, n.d.), pp. 40-42.

\* For a detailed description of the Shadhili order with its various sub-branches, see Martin Lings, A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century, pp. 232-233.

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